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TO MY JUNIORS
ALFRED AND CHRISTINE
AND TO THE
MOTHER OF MY JUNIORS
CHRISTINE MITCHELL SADLER
THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED

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INTRODUCTION

THE author of this book has done well in connecting his stories and sermons with the life and interests of children. He has found sermons for his flock of "little folk" in games and festivals, in homely watchwords and proverbs, in vacation experiences and visits to the Zoo. There are stories told here almost as old as the hills, but his treatment of them has made them fresh as the dawn which began this day. The common flowers of the roadside and the rarer specimens of the conservatory are made to serve his purpose. All through this collection of Stories and Junior Sermons—some of which I was permitted to hear, to my delight and edification—one feels a spiritual motive which challenges deeper loyalty to life's great virtues, and produces profounder faith in Him whose comradeship is the inspiration of all that is noblest and best.

These stories indicate a very definite tendency in modern church work, and have been inspired and produced by it, namely, the training of children in Christian worship and

service. This explains the growing popularity of the junior congregation which has come into the field of religious effort, because a large number of pastors, like the author of this book, have recognized the spiritual possibilities of the young and have determined upon a ministry that would give them opportunity for realization. Consequently, thousands of children are being trained in public worship, inspired to assume those social and religious attitudes characteristic of Christianity, and informed in those ideas, ideals, and programs which sprang from the great heart of Him who said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Pastors will find this a welcome volume in their campaign of loving endeavor in the junior congregation, and parents will rejoice in its fascinating pages as they peruse them at the hearth with the "wee folk gathered round."

CALVIN W. LAUFER,

Special Field Representative for Religious Education, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work.
New York City.

PREFACE

The Story-Sermons were given to the junior congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, Jersey City, New Jersey, during the past five years, and are now published at the urgent request of many who have heard them, with the hope that pastors, parents and teachers may find them helpful in their work with the children.

The author desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to the many sources from which his illustrations are drawn, and in particular to his wife, Christine Mitchell Sadler, who read all of the Story-Sermons in manuscript as they were being prepared for publication, and made most valuable criticisms.

ALFRED J. SADLER.

PART ONE
GENERAL

If there is anything that will endure
The eye of God, because it still is pure,
It is the spirit of a little child,
Fresh from his hand, and therefore undefiled.
Nearer the gates of Paradise than we,
Our children breathe its airs, its angels see;
And when they pray, God hears their simple prayer,
Yea, even sheathes his sword, in judgment bare.¹

—R. H. Stoddard.

¹ Quoted from *Poetical Illustrations*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, Publishers, New York.

I

THE CHILDREN WHO WOULD NOT PLAY

How many of you children have played wedding? Perhaps your sister was recently married, and you were so interested in the ceremony, that you thought it would be great fun to invent a wedding game. Do you know that children played wedding in the time of Jesus? Yes, and sometimes they quarreled about it too, and that was why Jesus spoke specially of it.

One day he stood and watched the children playing in the market place, which was usually a large open square in the city, a fine place to play. Some of the children wanted to play wedding. They felt happy and joyous, as if it were good to be alive, and they began to play on the flageolet dance tunes which they had heard at weddings, but for some reason, the other children were cross and sulky and would not play. "All right," said the first group, "anything to oblige. If you won't play wedding, let's play funeral."

But again they refused. They would neither play wedding nor funeral.

A little later Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, who were criticizing him, and he said to them: "You are just like those children in the market place who wouldn't play. John the Baptist came, wearing camel's hair and often fasting, but he did not please you. You thought he was too strict, too solemn. I attend feasts and go rejoicing, but I do not please you either."

I wonder why the children would not play. Can any of you guess? Well, we are not told, but I imagine it was because they had quarreled about something. Games reveal character, and you can always tell spoiled children—those who want their own way. They are the kind who quarrel on the least provocation, and they scowl, and growl, and sulk, and refuse to play. Of course none of you children are like that. Yet I am sorry to say that even the very best of friends quarrel sometimes, both children and grown-ups, and they say and do things that make Jesus sorry, for which they themselves are sorry afterward.

I read the other day of a new way to stop a quarrel. Perhaps you would like to hear it. A mother was sitting by an open window as two boys were playing marbles outside.

As the game went on, mother heard one boy say, "You cheated."

The other boy said, "I didn't."

"You did," was the reply, and then the mother thought it was time to interfere.

Instead of saying, "Boys, stop your quarreling this instant," she said: "Sing it, children! Sing it!"

They looked at each other in surprise, not knowing what to make of it, when out of the window floated this song:

"O Willie, you cheated!"

"I didn't!"

"You did!"

"Sing it, boys," she said again.

They couldn't sing it, so they looked at each other and laughed. They were ashamed and stopped quarreling.

You know, boys and girls, there are some things you cannot sing. You cannot sing your anger. Try it the next time you want to tell the boy who displeases you what you are going to do to him. You cannot do it. Don't you think that things you cannot sing are far better not said?

But I know of even a better way than that to stop quarreling. The president of the Chicago Kindergarten College told this story:

"A four-year-old boy was quick-tempered,

and when he was angry he would say harsh things to his two-year-old sister, and even strike her. One day, when he had done this, the mother called him to her.

“‘Philip,’ she said, quietly, ‘it makes mother feel very sad to hear you speak that way to your little sister.’

“‘I know it does, mother,’ the boy replied, ‘but I just can’t help it.’

“‘Do you know, Philip,’ his mother continued, ‘that sometimes you make me feel just that way about you? Would you like to know what I do to keep from speaking the cross words to you?’

“‘The boy looked up into his mother’s face, and said, ‘Yes, mother.’

“‘When I feel the quick, angry words coming, I shut my eyes for a moment, and say, “Please, God, help me to be strong.”’

“‘The boy made no reply, but, kissing his mother, he slipped away and went back to play with his sister. Soon he was angry again, and with his arm in the air, ready to strike her, he cried, ‘You shan’t do that, sister!’—but at once he caught himself and shut his eyes tight, and his arm dropped to his side, and when he opened his eyes, he said, kindly, ‘All right, sister, you can have that, I will take this.’”’

So, boys and girls, if you pray to God, your heavenly Father, he will give you strength to keep from quarreling and refusing to play with your little friends.

II

FOOTPRINTS AND RAINDROPS

WHEN I was in college the professor of geology often took his classes out to study the formation of the rocks in the country near by. One day we went down to the Connecticut River, and there in a rock on the bank we saw the tracks of a great animal, made hundreds of thousands of years ago.

One day this very large animal (you can see a skeleton of an animal just like him in the Museum of Natural History, New York city) walked through the wet sand, leaving every footprint clearly marked—just as animals do to-day—and through the course of centuries the sand changed into rock and the footprints were preserved. But a little farther along the bank I saw what seemed to me even more wonderful—little hollows in the rocks which were once the marks of raindrops, probably made at the same time as the footprints. They too had been preserved in the ancient rock, and, by noticing the direction in which they were made, you could tell which way

the wind was blowing at the time these raindrops fell thousands of years ago. So, boys and girls, I want you to remember that every word you speak and everything you do make an impression upon some one which lasts a long, long time, like the impression made by those raindrops. That is what we call our "influence." How careful we ought to be every day to speak only kind words and do only good things!

Now, when I speak about your influence upon others I do not mean that you should always be thinking about it. That would be one of the worst things you could do. I want you to live your lives naturally, joyously, happily, always doing your best. Play while you play, work while you work, but ask God every morning to help you do the right, and then you need not worry about your influence. He will take care of that. It is like casting a shadow. We hold up the object between the light and the place where we want the shadow cast and the light does the rest. The light corresponds to God. We are the object and the shadow is our influence.

"Before we make you well, we must put you to sleep," said a kind surgeon to a little girl as he was about to give her ether. "Then," said she, "if you are going to put me to sleep,

I must say my prayers first," and she knelt down and repeated:

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take.”

That night the surgeon prayed for the first time in twenty years. He had been so busy about everything else that he had forgotten about God, but the little girl's words reminded him. She didn't know the influence her words would have. She didn't think anything about it. She only did what was right, and God blessed her, so that, unconsciously, she influenced the great surgeon and brought him back to God.

III

THE BOY WHO CAME WHEN HE WAS CALLED

"THAT is not my boy," said one mother, "because, I am sorry to say, he does not come when he is called, especially when it is time to get up in the morning."

"My difficulty," says another mother, "is that my children do not come from play when they are called. They say they do not hear me. I'm afraid, however, that they do not want to hear."

"Mary," said this mother, the other day, to her seven-year-old daughter, "why did you not come when I called you? Didn't you hear me?"

"Yes, mother."

"Then, why didn't you look to see what I wanted?"

"Because, mother, I knew if I looked, I would have to come in, and I did not want to come in just yet."

So you see a great many boys and girls do not hear when father or mother calls because

they do not want to hear. But the boy about whom I am going to talk to you this morning came when he was called.

Let me tell you the first part of the story, and see if you know his name. This boy's mother for a long time had prayed to God to send a baby boy to her home, and at last God heard her prayer. When he was about as big as you boys she took him up to God's house and left him there, because she had promised God that she would do so. All day long he was busy opening doors and closing them, cleaning the lamps and altar, and doing whatever was needed by the good old man Eli, who was in charge. Now, do you know who the little boy was? Yes—Samuel!

One night as Samuel was lying on his little cot he heard some one calling, and instead of rubbing his eyes and saying, "What is it?" he rose up quickly and came to Eli, because he thought Eli was calling, and asked: "What is it? What do you want me to do?"

"Why, I didn't call you," said Eli.

"I thought you did. I must have dreamed it," said Samuel, and went back to his bed. But a second and third time Samuel heard some one calling, and each time he ran to Eli. Then Eli realized that it must be God calling him, and he told Samuel if he heard

the voice again, to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Samuel obeyed, and God spoke to him, and because he was so obedient, because he came when he was called, God made him his messenger to Eli, and later on the prophet over all Israel.

The first thing necessary for all true success, boys and girls, is obedience, prompt obedience. I wonder if we realize how all good men, all great men, learned this lesson when they were boys. We call George Washington the "Father of his Country," "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," because he was both good and great, but he would never have become so had he not learned to obey.

"How did you manage to raise such a splendid son?" said a distinguished French officer to Mrs. Washington, our first President's mother.

She replied, "I taught him to obey."

So with Jesus whom we love. After his visit to the Temple at Jerusalem, when he was twelve years old, we read that Jesus went along with his father and mother to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. That means he did as he was told. So, boys and girls, learn to obey your parents, your teachers, and you will have taken the first step toward

being like George Washington—yes, you will have taken the first step toward being like Jesus himself. One of the best ways to begin is to follow the example of the boy Samuel and always come when you are called.

“Oh, give me Samuel’s ear,
The open ear, O Lord,
Alive and quick to hear
Each whisper of thy word.
Like him, to answer at thy call
And to obey thee, first of all.”

IV

THE BOY WHO DID NOT RUN AWAY

A most interesting story is told of a little drummer boy who was in the Civil War. He was so enthusiastic over his work, and placed so much importance upon it, that he wanted to be in everything in which his regiment was. The officers and soldiers laughed at his enthusiasm, because he apparently thought that the success of the whole army depended upon him and the way he beat his drum; and the day did come when the army was saved by his drum. One morning, very early, the enemy made a surprise attack. Being a surprise attack, the Union soldiers were not prepared for it, and half awake and with everything in confusion, some of the soldiers started to run, so that a stampede of the whole army threatened. Suddenly the beat of the drummer was heard. Rat-a-tap-tap! Rat-a-tap-tap! It was the boy calling them to attention, for he always slept with his drum at his side. The men, hearing the drummer, and remembering their training, obeyed

orders, fell into line and successfully resisted the attack of the enemy. So the army was saved because a boy did not run away, but did his duty.

This morning we are going to talk about the boy in the Bible who did not run away. It was also a time of war. His older brothers had enlisted and were with the army, but he, being the youngest, stayed at home and helped his father on the farm. His particular duty was to tend the sheep. Oh, yes, you know who it was. "David!" That's right.

Sometimes the sheep would be on the hillside near home, and he could see his home in the distance. Sometimes he took the sheep far away from home to seek green pastures. Sometimes he led them to a sweet clear brook to quench their thirst, but at all times he watched them very carefully so that no harm should come to them, for he loved his sheep. If he saw one straying away, he called it by name (for each sheep had a name of its own), and it would come back, for the sheep came when they were called. Sometimes when he was far away with his sheep it would be dark before they reached home, and occasionally it was necessary to stay out all night on the hillside, but he always guarded them carefully. On one such night as this David heard a commotion among his flock. He turned

quickly. A lion had come up, seized one of the wee little lambs and was making off with it. David leaped in pursuit and soon caught the lion, for he was a fleet runner, and struck him a blow with his shepherd's staff. The lion dropped the lamb and turned to attack David, but he was a boy who did not run away. He caught the lion by the beard and slew him there. So he rescued the lamb from death, and taking it gently in his arms, carried it back to the flock. Another time a bear attacked the flock, but, being a boy who did not run away, David killed it also. Now see what was the result.

His father sent him to the army with food for his brethren, for in those days they had no quartermaster's department as we have now. The soldiers had to find food as best they could, so the parents often sent them food. When David reached the camp where his brothers were he found the army in a dreadful state of fear and consternation because of a great giant who had challenged them, and there was no one to accept the challenge. David, when he heard it, said: "I will go and fight him."

They laughed at this.

"What! a boy fight a giant?"

Then he said, "I killed a lion and a bear;

and this giant is no more than they, and the God who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, who delivered me out of the paw of the bear, will deliver me out of his hands."

You see if he had run away when the lion and the bear attacked him, David would not have had the courage to face the giant, but he did not run. So, trusting in God for protection and deliverance, the boy who did not run away went out with his sling to fight the giant, killed him, and saved his country.

Whenever you are in the path of duty, no matter what the danger or temptation, never run away.

V

THE BOY WHO HELPED JESUS

THE disciples had just returned from a preaching trip. After they had reported to Jesus what they had accomplished he said to them, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile." By "desert place" Jesus did not mean a barren, desolate, sandy place without trees and grass and water, but a quiet country place, where there were no houses nor people.

So Jesus and his disciples took a boat, and crossing to the other side of the lake which was called the Sea of Galilee, climbed the mountain. As they rested on a sunny slope they could look down upon the lovely flowers and grass of the meadow, where a little winding river, the River Jordan, entered the lake.

They had not been resting very long, however, before they saw great crowds of people coming toward them. While Jesus was disappointed because the disciples could not rest longer—he never thought of himself—he was so sorry for the people, that he began to teach

them and tell them stories. Now, Jesus could tell wonderful stories, and he was such an interesting teacher that the time passed very quickly, and before they realized it, it began to grow dark.

The disciples came to Jesus and said, "The people are very tired and hungry. Shall we send them to the neighboring villages to get something to eat?"

Jesus replied, "You give them something to eat."

"How can we?" said they.

"Why," said Philip, "even if we had forty dollars' worth of bread, it would not be sufficient!"

"How much do you have?" asked Jesus.

Andrew replied, "There is a lad here with five loaves and two small fishes."

Now, the loaves at that time were not as large as ours. Five loaves like those we buy from the baker's shop would be quite a bundle for a boy to carry around all day. No, a loaf was just about as large as a cookie, and of the same shape. We are told that they were barley cakes, and that indicates that the boy was very poor, because the rich people ate wheat cakes. Besides, the two small fishes were not fresh fish, like our pickerel or trout but two very small dried fish.

Nevertheless, after the disciples had seated the people in rows on the grass, Jesus took the five loaves and the two fishes, and prayed over them, and then gave them to the disciples, who in turn passed them on to the multitude. And what do you think? They were sufficient to feed five thousand, and twelve baskets full were left over! Five thousand fed from five little barley cakes and two small fishes? Yes, because Jesus performed a wonderful miracle, and this boy helped him do it.

I wish we knew this boy's name, but we do not. There are some things we do know about him, however. He was thoughtful and looked ahead. Some boys, when they are out picnicking, eat up all their lunch at once, and then go hungry for the rest of the day. But this boy exercised self-control. He knew he would need some food before night, so he left part of his lunch, and so was able to help Jesus. Then, too, he was unselfish. He was willing to give up his lunch for others, even though he might need it himself. Shall we try to be like him? Then perhaps we too can help Jesus. Wouldn't you like to help Jesus?

Jesus came to tell people about his heavenly Father, to speak kind words and do kind deeds, and to help men and women and boys

and girls to do right. You can do that. You can tell others about your heavenly Father. You can speak kind words and you can do kind deeds. Just as this boy gave his lunch for others so you can give your savings—your ten cents, your five cents, and even your pennies—to those who are in need—the poor starving children in Europe and Asia or in our own America. Whenever you do this you are helping Jesus.

VI

WHAT CAN A LITTLE GIRL DO?

So many times have we heard boys—yes, and older people too—say, “What can a little girl do?” and say it in such a sarcastic tone that I am going to tell you this morning what one little girl did.

We see her playing around so happily in her home in northern Israel—for children are children the world over—and in her study hours she learned about God and his prophets.

One day a company of Syrian soldiers came along robbing all the houses. In the confusion she was separated from her father and mother, and the soldiers took her, poor little frightened girl, and carried her off to their own distant land, Syria. There she was made a slave in the house of a general whose name was Naaman; and her special duty was to wait on Naaman’s wife.

Now, Naaman was a great general, and was known and loved all over the country as General Pershing is in America. But poor Naaman had the most dreaded of all diseases: he was a leper.

This little girl was so sorry for him, and often wondered what she could do to help. But what could a little girl do? One day a thought came to her. I think it was God who put the thought in her mind, don't you? And she went to her mistress and said, "O, I wish that my lord Naaman could go to the prophet who is in Samaria. He could cure him of his leprosy."

Now, this little girl must have been very good, and must have done her work so faithfully that her mistress trusted her, because she was so impressed with the little girl's story that she told her husband. The result was they followed her advice, and the great general went to the prophet in Samaria, whose name was Elisha, and was cured of his leprosy, and was also led to acknowledge the God of Israel as the true God. How he was cured is another story, but I want you to notice that this little girl was the one who suggested that he go to the prophet. Yes, a little girl can do just as much for Jesus as a boy, and sometimes more!

Juniors, do you remember the letter our missionary in China, Doctor Dobson, wrote to you? He said, "Little girls in China are taught that they are of very little use, and the boys are told that the girls are their slaves." "The

boys are taught to read, but the girls are not considered worth teaching." What, then, can a little girl in China do?

Do you know the story of the little Chinese girl who was a slave? She was taken to a missionary hospital in Canton, just as little Tak Fuk, our own little blind girl, was brought to Doctor Dobson's hospital. She was both blind and lame, and so her mistress deserted her. After a careful examination the doctor found it necessary to cut off her injured leg. She was in the hospital a long time, but before she left they taught her about God our heavenly Father and about Jesus. Then they found that the poor little girl had leprosy, like Naaman, so she was compelled to leave the hospital and the friends she loved there, and go to the lonely place where just the lepers live. But she loved Jesus now, and she was so happy that she told the other lepers about him. As a result, so many lepers became Christians that in five years a church was organized. This was what a little blind leper girl did.

So whenever you hear anyone say, "What can a little girl do?" tell them about the Hebrew maiden and the little Chinese leper girl.

VII

HE PAID TOO MUCH FOR HIS WHISTLE

How many of you have heard of Benjamin Franklin? Everyone, of course, for he was one of the great men in the early history of our country. You all know the story of his kite. One day in a severe thunderstorm he went out and flew a kite, and by means of a key, attracted the lightning. That was one of the first experiments made in electricity. You will read about it when you grow older. This morning I will tell you another story about Benjamin Franklin.

Once, when he was a boy, some friends came to visit his home, and before leaving gave him some money. Like most boys, instead of saving the money, he went out to the store to spend it. What should he buy? The first thing he saw in the shop was a wooden whistle. He wanted it very much, so he went in and offered the man all the money he had. The man accepted his offer, took the money, and gave him the whistle. He blew the whistle all the morning, and had a wonderful time,

until he grew tired of it. Later on he found, to his surprise, that he had paid four times as much for it as he ought to have done. He paid too much for his whistle.

You remember, last week, in speaking of what a little girl can do, I told you how Naaman, the great general, by following the advice of the little Hebrew maiden, went to the prophet Elisha and was cured of his leprosy. Now, Naaman was so grateful that he came back to the prophet and offered him a large reward, but the prophet refused to accept it. He had simply done his duty, and he would not take money for that. The Boy Scout motto, you remember, is "Never take money for doing a good turn." So, while there were no Boy Scouts in those days, Elisha looked upon this as a good turn. Then, too, he wanted Naaman to be grateful to God.

After Naaman had started back home again, Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, said to himself: "Isn't it a pity that my master would not accept any of that money? He made a great mistake. How foolish he is! I am going to have some for myself." So he ran after Naaman, and told him that Elisha had changed his mind. Two sons of the prophet had come very unexpectedly to be his guests, and he would like a talent of silver (about two thou-

sand dollars—a large sum of money in those days), and two changes of raiment for them.

Naaman was very glad to give them, for he was really and truly grateful, and he made Gehazi take two talents of silver, instead of one, and the two changes of raiment, thinking, of course, they were for the prophet.

So Gehazi came back, hid the money and the raiment in the house, and then came into the presence of his master.

“Where have you been?” Elisha asked.

“I haven’t been anywhere. I didn’t go out,” Gehazi replied.

Not only was Gehazi covetous, but he told a lie. That is the way it usually is, if you commit one sin, you feel that you must commit another to cover it up.

Gehazi, however, could not cover up his sin; he could not deceive his master, for Elisha knew where he had been and what he had done. So he said to him, “Because you have done this thing, the leprosy of Naaman shall come upon you.”

There Gehazi was, with all his money and his clothes, but he had paid too much for them—his health, his honesty, and his honor. He paid too much for his whistle!

Even boys and girls do this sometimes. They do it when they pay too much for things

which will only give them pleasure just for a little while, but which prevent them from doing worth-while things. They do it when they cheat, or deceive, or do wrong in order that they may have a good time, or obtain for themselves something which they desire. Boys and girls, don't pay too much for your whistles!

VIII

GARDENING

(OBJECT: VARIOUS SEEDS)

THE great need of the world to-day is food, and our President has urged us all, men and women, boys and girls, to do our bit in supplying this need. The Boy Scouts have taken for their motto, "Every Scout to feed a soldier." That does not mean that the Boy Scout will send all the vegetables he raises to some particular soldier, but that he will provide them for his own family and so leave that much more in the markets for the government to buy.

I have here a collection of seeds (show seeds of various vegetables). Before we can use these, we must prepare the soil. We must either plow the ground or spade it thoroughly and fertilize it. Notice I said "thoroughly." The Scoutmaster engaged some men to spade the back yard and prepare it for the Boy Scouts. The men did not do their work thoroughly, however, and as a result the grass all came up and the work has to be done over again.

Remember that "whatever is worth doing is worth doing well."

Then notice that we reap what we sow. If I plant this parsley seed, what shall I reap? Radishes? No, parsley. If I plant this potato, shall I reap turnips? "Potatoes," you say. Of course; we reap what we sow. So it is in our lives. If we sow good thoughts, good words, we reap good deeds and a pure life. We reap what we sow.

We also reap more than we sow. One grain of wheat will produce thirty other grains, or perhaps sixty or one hundred. That is what Jesus meant when he said in the parable of the sower that "The good seed brought forth fruit—some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold and some an hundredfold."

They tell us that the seed of the sunflower sometimes produces as many as four thousand seeds, and that a single thistle seed has been known to produce as high as twenty-four thousand seeds in a single summer. When Australia was first colonized by men and women from Great Britain they found no thistle seed there, so a man in Scotland sent a package to his friend in the new land, "because," he said, "it was too bad for them to be without their national flower." It was such a small seed that the officials allowed it to be planted,

thinking it would do no harm. Now, several sections of the country are overrun with the Scotch thistle, and it is the plague of all the farmers. If we sow one bad thought, we reap many. If we sow a good thought, or a kind word, we likewise will reap many more than we sow.

An Indian chief, in the province of Bengal in northern India, learned to read, and the first thing he read was a little leaflet telling him about Jesus. Through the influence of this tract he gave his heart to Jesus and he became so enthusiastic that he went back to his native village and told all the men and women about him, and as a result fifteen hundred were baptized in that one year and received into the church, and all because the chief read one tract which cost only one penny. We reap more than we sow!

IX

WEEDS

(OBJECT: WEEDS)

WHAT is this that I hold in my hand? Weeds. And where do they grow? In gardens. Yes. That is one reason why so many boys and girls do not like gardens—there are so many weeds in them. Sometimes they think that weeds were made purposely to keep boys from going fishing or playing ball, because just when they are ready to start with the other boys father or mother sends them into the garden to pull weeds. So boys and girls do not have a good opinion of weeds. Neither do their fathers and mothers, because they know that the weeds keep the good seed from growing. Jesus, you remember, in telling the story about the sower, said that some of the seed fell among thorns (which would correspond to our weeds), and the thorns sprang up and choked them. The seeds could not grow and could not bear fruit.

Now, weeds are so troublesome because they have such small beginnings and grow so

fast. They tell us that one of the dandelions which grow in our lawns, as well as in our gardens, has two thousand seeds, and the common dock has thirteen thousand, while the red poppy has fifty thousand. That is why it is so hard to get rid of them. There are so many of them and they are so persistent. It is useless to cut off the tops—you must pull them up by the roots and be sure to get all the roots, for if you do not the weeds will come right up again. Remember this when you make your own gardens, as I hope you will.

Now, weeds do not suggest pleasant things but bad things, like bad tempers, bad thoughts, selfishness and greed, which crowd the good things out of your lives. Like weeds, the bad things come from neglect. We have not been careful to see no evil, and to hear no evil; and the bad things have entered our hearts and taken root there. Then they grow very fast indeed, like the weeds. For example, a boy who has told a lie finds it very easy to tell another, and soon the habit grows upon him, so that no one believes him. Perhaps he has an apple or some other good thing, and he refuses to share it with his little sister or his playmate—he wants to keep it all for himself. Now, this is a very little thing,

but it is what we would call selfishness, and selfishness is like a weed: it grows, oh, so fast, and soon the boy is selfish and greedy all the time.

But while weeds stand for evil things, flowers stand for good things, and I am sure we would all much rather have flowers than weeds, whether in our gardens or in our lives. So let us pray the prayer of the little Arab girl: "Take away all ugly weeds from my heart and plant beautiful flowers there, that it may be always sweet for Jesus."

X

LOOKING ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

OPTIMIST! Pessimist! I wonder how many of you boys and girls know what those words mean? They are long words, but you often hear them. Sometimes you will hear father say, "Mr. Jones is an optimist, while Mr. Smith is a pessimist." What does he mean? Why, he means that Mr. Jones looks on the bright side, while Mr. Smith looks on the dark side. You know some people—boys and girls as well as grown-ups—are always looking on the dark side. If they are planning to attend a picnic or their annual Sunday-school excursion, they fear it will rain, for "something is always happening to take the joy out of life." Then they see some one, or perhaps they read of some one who is doing wrong, and they say: "Oh, everybody is wicked; things are all wrong. I am sure the world is going to the dogs." People have been saying that for a long time, for there have always been pessimists; but the world has not gone to the dogs yet.

¹“My grandpa notes the world’s worn cogs,
And says we’re going to the dogs.
His granddad in his house of logs,
Swore things were going to the dogs;
His dad amid the Flemish bogs,
Vowed things were going to the dogs,
The cave man in his queer skin togs,
Said things were going to the dogs,
But this is what I have to state,
The dogs have had an awful wait.”

No, the world has not gone to the dogs, because God is here, and he is taking care of it and always will. So don’t be pessimists! Don’t look on the dark side! Don’t be always expecting and talking about unpleasant things going to happen; but be optimists. Look on the bright side. Talk about the good things, the happy things, the pleasant things—and you can find lots of them to talk about if you only try. Why not be like the little bare-foot boy whom the man met on the road, carrying a basket of blackberries, and said to him, “Sammy, where did you get such nice berries?”

“Over there, sir, in the briars.”

“Won’t your mother be glad to see you come home with a basket of such nice ripe fruit?”

“Yes, sir,” said Sammy. “She always seems

¹ Author Unknown.

glad when I hold up the berries, and I don't tell her anything about the briars in my feet."

The man rode on. Sammy's remark had given him a lesson, and he resolved that henceforth he too would try to hold up the berries and say nothing about the briars.

XI

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY

How many of you know the Ten Commandments which God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai? It is splendid to see so many hands raised. I want you all to learn them so well that you will never forget them even when you grow up.

The words that I quoted form the first sentence of the fourth commandment. God tells us that we must keep his day holy. What does he mean by that?

I think he means, first, that we should go to church and worship him. Jesus, when he was a boy in Nazareth, went to the synagogue every Sabbath day and joined in singing psalms and listened to God's Word read and explained. Then when he grew up he went to Jerusalem and worshiped God in the Temple there. What Jesus did we must do, for God loves to have his children come to his sanctuary and sing his praises and offer their prayers. I trust that you boys and girls will

never forget to do that, and that you will allow nothing to prevent you from coming to church, which is God's house, so that you may worship him, just as Jesus did.

If, however, we would worship God in church on the Sabbath as Jesus worshiped him in the Temple, we must be careful how we spend the rest of the day. First, we must be careful what we read. Suppose a friend invites you to dinner and makes special preparation for it, securing everything that you like; on your way to the dinner you stop at an Italian fruitstand and there gorge yourself with bananas and peanuts, so that you are not able to eat a bite of the splendid dinner which she has prepared, what would your hostess say? How would she feel? Well, every Sunday God has invited you to come to his house to hear what he has to say to you. But if before you come you read all the jokes and stories in the Sunday newspapers, then your hearts and minds will be so full that you will have no room for anything else. How do you suppose God will feel about it? Don't you think it will grieve him very much?

Then we must also be careful of what we do on Sunday, for it is God's day. He calls it, "My Sabbath, my Holy Day." On it, he tells us in the fourth commandment, we must

do no work, but rest as he rested. When men, women, and children forget this and spend all their time on God's day in work, or in sports and pleasures of various kinds, then they are using God's day in a different way from that which he intended. They are stealing from him.

I am very glad that President Harding did not play golf on Sunday, and so, as the President of the United States, set all the men of our country a good example. He believed in keeping the day holy. He would not steal from God.

Have you ever seen real Chinese money? They use large pennies called "cash" and each penny has a hole in the center so that a lot of them can be strung on a cord. It takes eleven of them to equal one of our pennies, so you can see a man has to carry a long string of coins. A man was going along the street in China one day, and had his long string of coins on his arm, when a beggar asked him for money. He felt so sorry for the beggar that he took all the coins but one off the string and gave them to him—kept only one for himself—and walked on. He had gone only a little way when the same beggar slipped quietly up behind him and stole the last coin. Did you ever hear of a meaner trick than that?

When God made the days, he gave us six days for ourselves, for our work and for our pleasure—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, all but one. Sunday he kept for himself. Shall we be like the mean beggar and steal that day for ourselves, instead of spending it in doing things for God? “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”

XII

"IT CAN'T BE DONE! HERE IT IS!"

It is said that after the American marines landed in France to do their part in helping to win the World War, they so often heard the words "It can't be done," that they decided to show the world what the marines could do, so they took for their motto "It can't be done! Here it is!"

We know how bravely they lived up to this motto, many times doing what seemed to others impossible. So I want you ~~boys and~~ girls to take this as one of your mottoes in life: "It can't be done! Here it is!"

You remember the story of the spies: the Israelites were encamped at a place called Kadesh, where Moses sent out twelve men to spy out the promised land. When they came back they all agreed it was a very wonderful country. They said it was a land flowing with milk and honey. They meant, of course, that it was very fertile and very prosperous. But when it came to the possibility of conquering the land they did not agree.

Ten of the men said: "The people of the

country are very strong, and all their cities are surrounded by walls. They are giants, and we are like grasshoppers in their sight. Then, too, they have great fortresses. It is impossible to take them."

But the other two men, Joshua and Caleb, said, "What these men say about the walls, the fortresses, and the giants is all true, but let us go up and possess the land."

It was just as if they had said, "It can't be done! Here it is!" Led by Joshua and Caleb, the people accomplished what the other spies said was impossible.

There are many other stories in the Bible—like the story of David and Goliath, of Gideon and the Midianites—which teach us the same lesson. ~~Ask father and mother to tell them to you, for they are very interesting.~~

Not only in the Bible, however, but in other history, you will find stories of men who have done the seemingly impossible. You have all read how Columbus discovered America. He wanted to discover a new route to India, but for a long, long time he could get no one to loan him money to hire the ships because they said it was impossible. So he traveled back and forth between Spain, Italy, Portugal, and France endeavoring to raise the money. At last Queen Isabella listened to

his plea, and helped him to equip the ships. You know the rest—Columbus sailed out over the ocean and discovered America.

About sixty or seventy years ago a large number of people in this country said to William Lloyd Garrison and his companions, who wanted to free the slaves, "It can't be done"; but these earnest men and women did not give up. They kept on working—working and praying—and the slaves were freed in the Civil War.

We are very thankful to God that, at last, we have prohibition in America, for alcohol is one of the greatest curses in the world, one of the greatest enemies of men, women, and children. About twenty years ago a few enthusiastic men and women took for their motto "The United States dry in 1920." Everybody laughed, even their friends, and said, "It can't be done!" But they kept on praying and working, and, "Here it is!"—America a saloonless nation, and in the same spirit we are going to keep it a saloonless nation. So let us take for our motto, "It can't be done! Here it is!"

"Somebody said, 'It couldn't be done,'

But he, with a chuckle, replied

That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one

Who wouldn't say so till he tried.

“So he buckled right in, with a trace of a grin
 On his face. If he worried, he hid it.
 He started to sing as he tackled the thing
 That couldn’t be done—and he did it.”¹

But to carry out the motto, we need:

First, perseverance, or ~~what I like to call~~ “stick-to-it-iveness.” “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” You remember the story of Demosthenes. He thought he would like to be a great orator, but when he rose to speak he stammered so badly that the people all laughed at him. “It is ridiculous,” they said, “for a person like that to try to speak.” Did Demosthenes give up? No, he persevered. He went down to the seashore and practiced and practiced, until he overcame his stammering, and he became one of the greatest orators of the world.

Secondly, we must have faith in God if we would do the impossible for him. I have spoken of Joshua and Caleb, Gideon and David. Faith was the secret of their success—they trusted in God. The great apostle Paul, who did so much for Jesus, said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.” So can we. When people say, “It can’t be done,” let *us* say, “Here it is.”

¹ Edgar A. Guest, “The Path to Home.” Copyrighted, 1919, by Reilly & Lee Co. Used by permission.

XIII

THE DWARF AND THE KNIGHT

ONE of the stories told about the Knights of the Round Table is that of a dwarf who was remarkable for his small stature and his deformity. Perhaps some of you have read about him. He went around the Court of King Arthur carrying a drawn sword and imploring the knights, one after another, to cut off his head. No one would do it. He had never done anybody any harm, and while he could do no good, he was doing no wrong. So the knights thought he was crazy when he wanted them to cut off his head and they refused his request.

At last he came to Sir Gawain, as noble and true a knight as ever lived. "Gawain," he said, "do you love me?"

"Why, yes," replied the knight, "you know that I love you. What would you like me to do?"

"I would have you take this sword and with it cut off my head," was the answer.

But Sir Gawain refused at first, for, like all good knights, he shrank from such a deed. But there was something so imploring in the

dwarf's tone, that he finally consented, and with a single blow he cleft the head clear from the body. But, wonderful to relate, as soon as it touched the earth, out of the little deformed body there sprang a tall and graceful knight, full of strength and goodness, who, years before, had been imprisoned in the dwarf's body by a bad magician. So, boys and girls, in the same way, there is imprisoned in each boy a good and true man, and in each girl a noble and beautiful woman, just waiting to be liberated.

One day a noted sculptor was walking along the street when he saw a piece of discarded marble, which had been thrown out by another sculptor, who thought it good for nothing. He had it taken to his own studio and out of it he made a lovely angel. How did he do it? Why, he took a mallet and his chisel and he cut a bit away here, and a bit away there, and he filed and smoothed away all the rough little bits and the sharp little edges, and by and by there was the statue of the beautiful angel.

Just as there was the figure of a beautiful knight hidden away in the form of the dwarf, just as there was the figure of an angel hidden away in the discarded piece of marble, so there is hidden away in each one of you a beau-

tiful character, but it must be drawn out, it must be developed. That is what father and mother and teachers are trying to do as they teach you and train you. Sometimes you think that they are severe in their discipline and that they do not love you, when they do not allow you to do some things you want to do, and compel you to do other things that you do not want to do. But, when you grow older, you will understand that they were simply hewing and chipping away the rough places in your character, just like the sculptor did with his piece of marble.

Here the comparison ends, for the piece of marble was helpless under the chisel of the sculptor, but *you* can help your parents and teachers as they chip away the rough and sharp edges. Yes, you can do some of it yourselves. You can be your own sculptors. The little selfish things, the little mean things, the unkind things, the cowardly things, everything that is hiding what is good in you, hiding the real you—for the good is the real you, not the bad, never forget that—so, everything that is hiding the good you must chip away, and Jesus will help you. Then your life will appear to the world what God wants it to be—and I am sure what you want it to be—strong, beautiful, and true.

XIV

THE FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL

HAVE you ever heard the story of the first Bible school? One of the very first schools that I know of was started by Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, who lived about 874 B. C. He was the fifth king after David. We are told that King Jehoshaphat walked in the first ways of his father David—that is, in the good ways—instead of worshiping idols, as did some of the kings of Israel. Because of this God was with him and blessed him.

But Jehoshaphat was not only good himself, he wanted his people to be good. He knew that he could not keep them true to God unless they understood just what God's commandments were, and so he appointed five princes to oversee the work of instruction; and with nine Levites and two priests they went from city to city in Judah, reading and explaining the word of God; that is, they organized Bible schools. The men, women, and children came and listened to these teachers, just as we listen to the teachers in our Bible schools, only they did not wait for the Sabbath day

but had their Bible schools every day in the week. That is the story of the very first Bible schools in the world. I am sorry to say they did not last very long.

After the schools of Jehoshaphat more than two thousand years passed before the first of our present Sunday schools was organized. I wonder if you know the name of the man who started the first Sunday school, and where he lived. His name was Robert Raikes, and he lived in Gloucester, England. I have seen the house in which he lived and the building in which the first Sunday school was held. It seems that at that time pin-making was one of the great industries of Gloucester, and great numbers of small children worked in the factories because they did not have child-labor laws in those days. The children had no time to study during the week, and on Sunday they would meet in the streets to play, and often to quarrel and fight. Mr. Raikes felt very sorry for them, and so he gathered them together, first of all in this building, and there taught them how to read and write. The first teachers, who were women, were paid for their services.

In a letter written in 1784 Mr. Raikes told how the school was conducted. The children were to come soon after ten o'clock in the

morning and stay until twelve. They were to go home to lunch and then return at one, and after reading a lesson, they went to church, walking two by two. After church they returned and studied the Bible again. They also learned to read the Catechism. He told how he tried to teach them to be good-natured to each other, not to provoke each other, to be obedient to their parents, and not to offend God by swearing. At five o'clock they were dismissed with the injunction to go straight home. Would you like to go to Sunday school all day like that?

Well, that is the story of the first Sunday school. Just think of it! Only one Sunday school at that time, and now there are thousands of Sunday schools all over the world!

The object of the Bible school started by Jehoshaphat and the object of the first Sunday school started by Robert Raikes were one and the same—to teach men, women, and children to know the Bible so that they might love and serve God. So, boys and girls, I want you to remember that you come to Sunday school to study the Bible and to learn what it teaches about God and Jesus.

In the book of the Psalms we are told that God's Word—the Bible—is a lamp unto our feet. You know in the days when those words

were written, they did not have street lights as we do to-day, but they had little foot-lamps which they tied on to the toes of their shoes so that the light might shine upon the path. Then they could see any obstacle that might be in the way, and not stumble over it. Knowing that, you can understand what the writer meant when he said that "God's word is a lamp unto our feet." He meant that if you know the Bible well enough, some verse or truth from it will come into your mind whenever you are in danger or temptation, or whenever you are in doubt as to what is right. It will be like the foot-lamp, it will shine upon your path and give light, so that you will not stumble and fall. So I want you not only to read and study the Bible but to commit to memory just as much as you can. Let us begin with this text for to-day, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

XV

THE MAN WHO WAS NOT AFRAID TO PRAY

HE was all alone in a strange place, far away from his home, from which he had been taken captive many years before. Though he lived in a palace and had good things to eat, and rich clothes to wear, with servants to wait upon him, he was very lonesome and homesick. He was very busy too, for the king had made him prime minister over the whole realm, but he was not too busy to pray. Three times a day he went to his room, and opening his windows in the direction of his old home, he prayed to his God.

Some of the princes and courtiers, when they saw how the king honored him, were very jealous, but he did his work so well and was so faithful and true that they could find no fault of which to complain to the king. They noticed, however, that he always prayed three times a day, so they went to the king and asked him to forbid everyone in that country to pray for thirty days. If anyone wanted anything they must ask the king. If

anyone disobeyed, the king should have him thrown into a den of lions.

The king wanted to please his princes and courtiers, so he consented to do as they wished. But when the man about whom I am speaking heard it he said: "I am very sorry; I like to do what the king commands, but I cannot stop praying to God, even to please the king. I must pray as I have been taught, even though the king does throw me into a den of lions."

Oh, now you know the man's name! Yes, Daniel! So, three times every day, just as before, Daniel went to his room and prayed to his God, for he was not afraid!

But the wicked princes were watching, and they ran to the king and said: "Oh, king, you commanded that if any man should ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, except of you, he should be cast into the den of lions. Now, here is this man Daniel; he is still praying three times a day. You must cast him to the lions as you said you would."

The king was very sorry, for he loved Daniel, but he felt he must keep his word. So they put Daniel in the den of lions; but Daniel prayed and God protected him. The next morning the king came and, looking down into the den, called, "Daniel, Daniel, are you there?"

“Yes, O king! God shut the lions’ mouths so they did not hurt me.”

The king was very glad, and he said, “Come out, Daniel, come quickly. Your God is the only true God, and I and my people will worship him from this day on.”

That is the story of the man who was not afraid to pray.

I have read of a boy who went away to school. Several of the boys slept on cots in a dormitory. The first night he knelt down just as he did at home, and immediately the other boys began to laugh and make all sorts of noises. When that did not stop him, they threw pillows and slippers and whatever they could lay their hands on. The boy did not budge. While he was praying he felt some one at his side. It was the smallest boy in the room. He too had promised his mother to say his prayers; but he had been afraid before. Seeing this boy who was not afraid, he took courage and knelt down beside him. So you see the boy who was not afraid to pray not only did his duty but also helped the younger lad keep his promise. More than that, when the other boys saw that he was not afraid they admired him for his pluck, and he became a leader among them. Boys and girls, never be afraid to pray.

XVI

THE MAN WITH A GROUCH

MANY years ago there lived a king in Samaria by the name of Ahab. One day, after looking around his ivory-walled palace—for he was very proud of all his fine possessions—he went up on the palace roof and looked toward the east and toward the west. “All this is mine,” he said. Then a frown crossed his face, as he happened to look down at a vineyard which joined his palace grounds, for this alone was not his. “If I only owned that vineyard,” he said, “I should have a perfect garden.”

So the king sent at once for Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, and said, “Give me your vineyard, because it is near my house and I want to make a beautiful garden. In place of it, I will give you a far larger vineyard somewhere else, or, if you would prefer, I will give you the worth of the vineyard in money.” But Naboth, while thanking the king for his kind offer, refused to accept it. “Because,” said he, “my father gave me this vineyard. It has been in our family for a

great many generations, and I cannot give it up." The king was so angry, so disappointed, that he went into his palace and throwing himself on his couch, turned away his face and would eat nothing at all. In other words, he sulked. Because he could not have his own way he acted like a baby, king though he was, and gave way to his temper. To-day we would say that he had a "grouch."

Now, of course, you boys and girls do not act like that, do you? But, perhaps, you may have known some one who did. Some boys, you know, if they cannot be pitchers or catchers on the baseball team, won't play at all. They sulk, they have a grouch. Sometimes a girl, if she cannot play just as she wishes, likewise turns away and frets and sulks. She has a grouch too.

What is the reason that boys and girls and men and women have grouches? This rich king, Ahab, of whom we are speaking, had a grouch because he was selfish. He was not satisfied with his own great possessions. He coveted the one field, the one vineyard of his neighbor, who, compared with him, was a poor man. So, boys and girls, if you think about it, you will always find that those who have grouches are selfish. They are always thinking about their own happiness, and what

they can get for themselves; and if they do not succeed in their efforts, then they sulk. The best cure for a grouch, then, is to forget yourself and try to make some one happy. Suppose you begin to-morrow morning when you go to school, and instead of being selfish, try to see how you can help your classmates. Give up something for them. If you do that, you will not have a grouch all day. But why wait until to-morrow? Begin to-day, this very day, just as soon as you reach home. Lend brother that interesting book, or let sister have your picture puzzle.

I heard of a young woman of whom it was said: "She always made home happy." You can never say that about a grouch. I do not know of anything that can be said more to the praise of any man or woman, boy or girl, than—"He or she made home happy."

So, after to-day's Junior sermon, we are going to try to be happy wherever we are, so that people will not say, "Oh, my! I wish that boy had remained at home, I wish that child would not come here any more," but instead, will say, "I am so glad he came to-day, because he always makes everybody so happy. It is a good thing just to have him around."

Do you know how you can do it? Why, just by asking Jesus to help you to be like

himself, because, you know, it is said of him, "Even Christ pleased not himself." Then no longer will you think of yourselves, and fret and sulk, and have a "grouch" if you cannot have your own way, but you will be unselfish in everything, just as Jesus was.

XVII

CHRIST OF THE ANDES

(OBJECTS: ONE HUNDRED PENNIES AND
PICTURE OF "CHRIST OF THE ANDES")

AFTER the Great World War a conference was held in Washington to see if the large nations of the world could not agree to limit the number of soldiers and sailors, warships, aeroplanes, guns, and other implements of war that each should have. They did not wish to abolish armies and navies altogether, only to reduce their numbers. They felt that if the nations of the earth continued to make more and more guns and other machinery of war, the day would come when there would be another great war even more terrible than the last. While America did her duty in the World War, none of us want another war.

Why? First, because war is growing more and more terrible. Not only do the soldiers use guns and swords—and the guns are larger and more powerful than ever before—but they have death-dealing bombs which are dropped from aeroplanes, and terrible poisonous gases which cause those who inhale them to cough

and choke to death in terrible suffering. In wars of by-gone days only the soldiers were killed, but in the last war the Germans dropped bombs on unprotected villages and cities, and killed many men, women, and children. They tell us that the next war will be even more terrible.

Then war is growing more and more expensive, so that no nation will be able to pay. When the World War drew to a close it was costing more in one day than the whole Revolutionary War of the United States cost in eight years.

I have here one dollar in pennies. Let us divide them into two piles—ninety-three pennies in one and seven in the other. Out of every dollar your father pays in taxes to this government ninety-three pennies go for wars—past, present, and future—and only seven for educational, scientific, and other purposes. The other nations are much poorer than we, and their war burdens much heavier.

But a still more important reason why we do not want another war is that Jesus does not want it. You remember that when Jesus was born the angels sang "Peace on earth, good will toward men." War brings jealousy, hatred, cruelty, and untold suffering. Jesus wants the different countries to love each

other, and to help one another—not to quarrel, fight, and kill each other.

So, boys and girls, when you say your prayers, do not forget to ask God that the nations, when they differ with each other, may be willing to send their representatives to talk it over instead of going to war. The United States and Canada do that, also the Republics of Argentine and Chile. For many years Argentine and Chile were always quarreling, and sometimes their quarrels led to war and bloodshed. In the year 1900 they were on the brink of war, when they agreed to arbitrate, and asked the King of England to decide their dispute for them. On Easter Sunday that same year, good Bishop Benevente, of Argentina, made an earnest appeal for a statue of Christ to be erected on the frontier to celebrate the Victory of Peace.

So they melted some of their cannon and made a colossal bronze statue of Christ—twenty-six feet high, standing on a granite hemisphere symbolizing the world. This they erected on the Andean Peak, right on the boundary line, fourteen thousand feet above the sea. One hand holding the cross, the other lifted toward heaven, the Christ of the Andes stands between the two countries, in the attitude of blessing men as they live below him

in peace. The inscription on the pedestal reads, "Sooner shall mountains crumble to dust than Argentines and Chileans break the peace, which at the feet of Christ, the Redeemer, they have sworn to keep."

Pray, boys and girls, that what Argentine and Chile have done under the influence of the "Christ of the Andes" all the nations of the earth will do.

XVIII

TAKE A LITTLE HONEY WITH YOU

SOME years ago, in one of our religious papers, I read "A Sermon to Juniors." While I have forgotten the name of the writer and the sermon itself, I have not forgotten, and never will forget, the text. I am going to talk to you about it this morning, so that you may remember it too. The text was "Take a little honey with you."

There was a famine in the land of Canaan, so Jacob sent his sons down into Egypt to buy food. Who do you suppose was prime minister of Egypt at that time? Joseph, their long-lost brother, whom they had sold into slavery some years before, but had never since heard of. They did not recognize Joseph, but he recognized them. Desiring to teach his brothers a lesson for their past cruelty, he charged them with being spies, and to prove that they were not, he compelled them to leave one of their number, Simeon, in Egypt as a hostage, until they could bring their younger brother, Benjamin.

Having given their father, Jacob, the mes-

sage, they were now preparing to return to Egypt. Jacob, being anxious to win the favor of the prime minister—for he did not know it was Joseph—told his sons to take some presents to him, spices, myrrh, nuts, almonds, and a little honey, for he thought that would please him. I am quite sure it did too, because most people are fond of sweet things. That is one reason we give boxes of candy as presents.

In the book of Proverbs we are told that pleasant words are like honey. Sometimes we call them "honeyed words." So it seemed to me it would be a good thing if we all would take a little of that kind of honey with us.

I was returning from New York the other day and was very tired; but all the seats in the train were taken, with the exception of one which was supposed to hold four persons. In that seat just two men were sitting with their knees outspread, and their papers held out before them, utterly oblivious of the fact that others were standing. So I touched one of the men on the shoulder, and said very politely, "Won't you move over a little, please?" He grunted, but paid no other attention to my request. I was tempted to speak sharply to him and tell him what I thought of his selfishness, when there flashed into my

mind the words, "Take a little honey with you." So I repeated my request as politely as possible, but just a little louder, and this time the man moved, though rather ungraciously, it is true. You see, boys and girls, it makes all the difference in the world how you ask for things—whether it is of the street-car conductor, the clerk in the store, or the telephone operator. The motto, "The voice with a smile wins," is only another way of saying, "Take a little honey with you." It is a good thing, therefore, to take a little honey with you wherever you go.

After the Revolutionary War George Washington was making a long journey in his carriage, for they had no automobiles in those days. He was accompanied by several gentlemen in a carriage of their own. Late one afternoon, when they were anxious to reach the next town before darkness came on, they found the road blocked by a large wagon drawn by four horses going very slowly. Wanting to pass, a gentleman in the first carriage called out to the teamster, and, in an overbearing manner, ordered him to turn out. The man became very angry and refused to budge. George Washington, seeing the trouble, spoke very courteously to the driver, explained why they were in a hurry, and asked him to allow

them to pass. In a moment, the man had turned aside, and they were on their way. You see, George Washington "took a little honey with him."

Put a little honey in your suitcase when you go on your vacation this summer, for there will be rainy days when everybody seems cross, and days when the fish won't bite, and lots of other occasions when you will be tempted to speak sharply. But, above all, don't forget to have a little honey on the table every day at home, for you must be as sweet with your own folk as you are with friends and strangers. Then if anyone finds fault and says, "The bread is poor, the meat is tough, or the cake is dry," just say with a smile, "Please pass the honey."

PART TWO
SERIAL STORIES

GAMES

“And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.”—*Zechariah*.

XIX

GOLF

“THE Battle of Waterloo was won on the cricket-fields of England,” said the Duke of Wellington. The famous general meant that the men who won the battle received their training on the cricket-field. Yes, the games and the recreations of a nation have a great influence upon that nation; so I am going to talk with you boys and girls for three Sundays about the three great out-door games in this country, namely, golf, baseball and football.

What is this little white ball I hold in my hand? A golf ball, of course. Everyone knows a golf ball. They tell us that about three million men and women play in our country. Next to baseball it is our most popular game. In fact, I think more grown people play because so many simply watch baseball and do not play it themselves.

If you are to play golf, there are some things you must learn.

First. Keep your eye on the ball. This is the very first thing your teacher tells you. It seems so easy to hit this little white ball, but, unless you keep your eye on it, you will find

that it is not so easy as it seems. Instead of going straight forward as you wish, it will shoot off to the right or to the left, or you will miss it altogether, so you must keep your eye on it all the time.

Not only must you keep your eye on it, but you must keep your mind upon it also. You know it is very easy to look at a thing and be thinking of something else. Some of you boys have been looking at me this morning, but your thoughts were elsewhere. Perhaps you were thinking of the coaster-wagon that Henry has, and the new motor wheel which he has attached to it, or perhaps the girls have been thinking of Mary's new doll. So, in playing golf, you may be looking at the ball and thinking of something else. You may be thinking what your friends will say when they see how straight the ball goes. The result is one and the same. Therefore keep both eye and mind on the ball. This is what we call "concentration." A long word, isn't it? But now you know what it means. You must learn to concentrate if you would succeed in anything. Paul did it when he said, "This one thing I do."

Secondly. Don't look up until the stroke is finished, but "follow through." This was the second thing my friends told me. Some players are very anxious to see where the ball

is going. They look up before the stroke is finished and spoil it. So "Follow through" is a good motto for them and for us all. So many of us start to do something and do not finish. We do not *follow through*.

When we return after our vacations we are very enthusiastic, and we promise father and mother that we will study harder than we did last year. We mean it too, and our report card for October is fine. But the November one is not quite so good, and by December our reports are way down where they were before. We begin well, but we do not continue, we do not *follow through*.

Thirdly. To play good golf you must have a picture in your mind of where you want the ball to go. Especially is this true, when you are playing over what golfers call a "hazard," such as a stone wall, a tree, or a little lake, for sometimes you find these hazards in the course. So many times I have heard a player say, as he prepared to drive the ball across the lake, "Watch me put it in the lake." And he did. He tries again and again with the same result. Another player will say: "Watch me put it over. Do you see that green yonder? That's where I'm going to put it." And almost invariably he does. So, if you would succeed in golf, you must have a pic-

ture in your mind of where you want the ball to go, and play as you have been taught.

In the same way, boys and girls, you must have a picture in your mind of what you want to do and be. In other words, you must have an ideal toward which you are always moving. So many men and women just drift through life, with no ideals, no standards, and, of course, they fail. Do not be like them, but have a picture in your mind of what you want to be and strive to reach it.

I know a man who, when he was a little boy, worked in the mines of England. He was one of the door-boys. The mines were in sections, divided by doors, and when the little donkey came along with his wagon-load of coal these boys had to swing the doors open for him. Well, this little boy used to sit and read his Testament by the light of the tiny lamp on his cap, and as he read he had in his mind a picture of himself as a minister, preaching the gospel to many people. He worked hard and earned money to go to school. Then he worked his way through college, and now he is a minister of a large city church where he has realized the picture he made of himself when he was a little boy. He succeeded because, like the golfer, he had an ideal in mind and worked toward it.

XX

BASEBALL

BASEBALL! Baseball! Baseball! All over the country each summer, men and women, and even boys and girls, talk about baseball and wonder who will win the various championships. Yes, baseball is a very popular game indeed, and you are all so familiar with it that I need not describe it.

Notice first that there are certain rules in baseball as in other games. The pitcher must pitch the ball right over the homeplate, no higher than the batter's shoulder and no lower than his knees. Then if the batter does not hit the ball for a run, or if he hits at it and misses it, it is called a strike. If the pitcher pitches the ball too high or too low, it is called a ball, and four balls send the batter to first base. So there are rules for every part of the game, and to play the game successfully, you must know the rules.

See, the player out in the field yonder is catching the ball. Will he get it? Yes, he caught it, but he did not hold it firmly—it slipped through his fingers. He made an

error, and because of that error the batter has won his base, and perhaps made a home run. The error is marked down on the score card against the fielder, and it may mean the losing of the game for his side. So in the game of life be very careful about any errors. They always count against you, and they will affect not only yourself but others.

Another batter has come up. Instead of swinging his bat he is just holding it up to stop the ball. Why is he doing that? He is making what is known as a "bunt," or a "sacrifice hit." The ball falls right near him, so he is put out very easily, but the men on the base advance, and perhaps make a run. I am sure that he would have liked to have made a run himself, but he has sacrificed himself for the good of the team. He made a "sacrifice hit."

So, boys and girls, as followers of Jesus, you must not think only of your own glory, but you must be willing to make "sacrifice hits" for others. Jesus did it all the time. For example, he was very tired and went away into a quiet place to rest, but the people came crowding unto him, so he gave up his rest and first taught them and then fed them. That was making a "sacrifice hit." But he made the greatest "sacrifice hit" of all when

he gave up his life, when he died on the cross, so that men and women and children everywhere, all over the world, might know that God loves them, and that they must love him in return. It is this love that we commemorate on Good Friday and at every communion service.

XXI

FOOTBALL

AFTER baseball comes football. It is a splendid game for the fall and early winter months, before the snow comes, as it provides very vigorous out-of-door exercise. As most people are not so familiar with it as they are with baseball, I will give you a brief description.

In a regular game there are eleven players on each side, and at each end of the field is a goal made of upright posts supporting a cross-bar. The object is to advance the ball beyond the goal at the rear end of the opponents' half of the field—and you may do it by kicking the ball or carrying it. The side that does this the greatest number of times wins the game.

First there must be team work to play good football; that is, all the players must cooperate with each other. They must play together. You'll understand what I mean when you see your next game of football. The two opposing teams will line up against each other. One side has the ball and is endeavoring to advance with it down the field. See how in-

tense they are as they crouch, waiting for the signal to go. Then the captain calls out certain numbers, one after the other. We do not understand what the numbers mean, but the players who are in the secret, know from the numbers that are called which player will take the ball and in what direction he is to run, and how the rest of his team-mates will help him.

Suppose the player selected by the captain to run with the ball should say to himself, "I will not obey the captain's commands, but I will run in some other direction, and perhaps I'll make a touch-down." What do you suppose would happen? Why, he would fail utterly. You know some players are like that—always trying to show off before the on-lookers, so that they may be praised. We call that making a "grand-stand play." Such playing is selfish and it ruins the game. There must be cooperation—that is, you must play together and help one another to make the goals—even though it means that you will not get any glory for yourself. You must be willing to sacrifice for the good of the team, for the good of others, just as the baseball player sacrifices when he makes a "sacrifice hit."

Secondly, football is a very strenuous game,

and unless the players keep well they cannot stand the strain. They must not smoke, for smoking injures their breathing. They must be careful of what they eat, and go to bed at regular, early hours, and in every way try to keep well and strong. I have seen players dismissed from the college team because they smoked cigarettes or stayed out late at night, which things break down their health. So in the game of life you must try to keep your bodies well and strong, ready to do the work God has for you to do. You must follow the advice of the Christian athlete, the apostle Paul, who said, "Keep your body under." That means you must keep your temper, exercise self-control over your desires, and practice self-denial. You will find it hard sometimes, but with Jesus' help you can do it.

Thirdly, you must always play the game, whether it be football or any other game. That means two things—you must play fair and play to win. Some players, when they see the other side is stronger, either cheat or play in a half-hearted manner. We call the latter "quitters." How we do admire those who never give up, but do their best to the end!

The late President Roosevelt, one of the greatest Presidents the United States ever had,

in an address to boys said, "In life, as in a football game, the principle to follow is 'Hit the line hard. Don't foul and don't shirk, but hit the line hard.' " By "hitting the line hard" President Roosevelt meant that you must play with all your might, doing your very best. He practised what he preached—he always played and worked with all his might, and that is one of the reasons he was such a great man.

Play the game, play fair, play to win.

SUMMER EXPERIENCES¹

"Shout Ho!

Whoop and Holloa!

Summer is here—To the country we go.

School done,

Freedom and fun—

Hard work is over, and play is begun!"

—*Edna Kingsley Wallace.*

¹ "Song of Summer," from *Feelings and Things*, by Edna Kingsley Wallace. E. P. Dutton & Co. publishers.

XXII

CONTRARY WINDS

THOSE of you who have traveled in New Hampshire know that there are several lakes there, some small and some large. This last summer we spent our vacation on one of these lakes which was about five miles long and three miles wide. There were several islands in the lake and high mountains in the near distance. What a beautiful picture they presented every night at sunset, outlined against the western sky with its violet and rose and golden tints! Such good times we had too, swimming, fishing, and boating!

One day two of us rowed to a neighboring town about three miles away. The sun was shining and there was little or no breeze, so that the lake was as smooth as glass, and it was very easy rowing. While we were in town we noticed that quite a breeze had sprung up, and by the time that we had rowed up the little river and into the lake, it was blowing quite a gale, and, as so frequently happens in these little lakes, the waves rose very high. Unfortunately, the wind was blowing right in

our faces, so that rowing now became very difficult. It seemed sometimes, even when both of us rowed, that we made absolutely no progress, and if we stopped rowing, the waves took us right back again.

I thought of that little scene in the life of the disciples when Jesus, after he had fed the five thousand, sent his disciples across the sea in a boat, while he went to the mountain to pray. We read that they were rowing for hours, but they could make no headway because the wind was contrary. So we found that "the wind was contrary," but after awhile we managed to reach camp, very late, very tired, and very hungry.

"And the wind was contrary." That is my text, boys and girls, for you this morning. Life will not be all smooth sailing. There will be difficulties and hardships. The wind will sometimes be contrary, but you will not give up. You will keep on struggling and do your best, just as Lincoln did when he was a boy. He had no opportunities for education as we have to-day. He tells us that he only had about one year's schooling in all his life. Then, too, there were very few books and those were very expensive. Sometimes he would work many days just to earn the money to purchase one, and then walk miles to get it. After he

reached home, he would read by the light of the fire. We would say that the "wind was contrary" for him, but he persevered and won out at last.

So it was with President Garfield, and so it has been with many of the great men of the past—statesmen, scientists, artists, inventors, and discoverers. In spite of the "contrary winds" they won success. Will you win success by following their example?

Last of all, when the disciples met the "contrary winds" on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus came to them walking on the sea and helped them. So he will help you, when you experience the "contrary winds," if you only ask him.

XXIII

ROCKS

LAST summer, two weeks before our vacation ended, a friend and I purchased a motor canoe. What good times we had learning how to run it, and then how proud we were when we went chugging along down the lake!

After a week had passed we found it necessary to go to town to replenish our gasoline. So we sailed to the end of the lake and down through a little river to the landing stage of the nearest village.

As the young man was filling our gasoline tank he said, "Well, have you struck a rock yet?"

"No," we replied. "Why?"

"Well, don't worry," he said, "you will. Everyone who runs a motor boat on this lake strikes a rock sooner or later."

We laughed and said nothing, but to ourselves we said, "We are going to be the exception, we are not going to strike a rock." So I took the helm and my friend started the engine, and we went very carefully through the little river because the channel was very narrow.

When we entered the lake we did not steer

at once for our camp, but kept straight out into the lake, as a ledge of rocks ran out from the shore where the river enters the lake, and we had been told that we must be very careful to go out around them. When we were out, as we thought, far enough, I swung the helm over and steered for home, when, suddenly, there was a loud grating noise—we had struck a rock! We stopped, examined the boat, and were very glad to find that there seemed to be no great damage done. When we started the boat, however, it insisted on going backward instead of forward. But after a little delay, we righted matters and reached camp safely.

Now, boys and girls, in your voyage through life, you must beware of rocks. And I want you to notice there are two kinds of rocks.

First, the rocks that are visible, that is, those you can see. We had several rocks of this kind in our lake and some of them were quite large. Sometimes we saw a boat anchored near one of them and a person seated on the rock, fishing. No one would steer his boat upon one of these rocks, for they are in plain sight.

So in your voyage of life there are rocks that you see, the rocks against which your parents, your teachers, and your pastor have

warned you, like the saloon, the gambling-house, and the bad moving-picture shows. You need not go to any of these places unless you so desire. They are the visible rocks against which you will wreck your boat.

But there are other kinds of rocks that are even more dangerous—the hidden ones. If I had seen this hidden rock, I would not have steered the boat upon it, but I thought I had steered sufficiently far out into the lake to escape them all.

So it is the hidden rocks in life against which you must be especially on your guard. It is the temptation that comes when you are not looking for it, and when you do not expect it, that is so dangerous. Perhaps it is the temptation to cheat at an examination. You cannot solve one of the problems, and accidentally you see the answer of another student in front of you. Why not use it? Or perhaps you are tempted to take a postage stamp or something that does not belong to you, just to save yourself time and annoyance. In these and in other little ways, temptations come unexpectedly. They are just like hidden rocks in the lake.

So my text, this morning, is this saying of Jesus, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Beware of the hidden rocks.

A VISIT TO THE ZOO

XXIV

FEEDING-TIME AT THE ZOO

LAST week we made our annual trip to the Zoo. Perhaps you would like to hear about some of the interesting things that we saw.

We arrived just in time for the feeding of the bears. A keeper had a handcart filled with loaves of bread and pieces of meat, which he was throwing over into the dens of the bears. Each bear waited his turn for the bread and meat, with the exception of some little black bears who fought like cats.

We found the feeding so interesting to watch that we followed the keeper around. We decided that one of the bears in the last den must have poor teeth, because he took the hard loaf of bread over to a little pool of water in the center of the den, and dipping it in, held it there until it was soft. As we were watching him the keeper turned, and touching his cap, said to the man next to us, "Good afternoon, Chief." So we knew at once that this man was one of the superintendents of the Zoo. We spoke to him, and he told us some very interesting things about the animals.

"Did you see the big brown bears as you passed?" he asked. When we answered "Yes," he continued, "If you will come with me I will show you something that will interest you." So we all went back to see the big brown bears.

The father-bear was eating his dinner in one corner of the den, and the mother-bear in the other. As we stood and watched them the superintendent told us their history, and how they were two of the largest bears in captivity. He said: "An army officer who has hunted bears was here the other day, and he exclaimed: 'My! I wouldn't like to meet that big fellow in the woods! He is the largest I have ever seen.'"

Just then, the big father-bear finished his loaves and meat, and, with a roar, rushed toward the mother-bear, who was still eating. She heard him coming, gave a funny scream, and grabbing a bone, rushed to another corner of the den. She left behind her two or three loaves of bread and some fine meat, and the father-bear tried to pick them all up at once in his paws. There were too many for him, however, so with his forepaws, he pulled them all under him, and calmly sitting down on them, ate them one by one. "You see," said the superintendent, "that bear does not be-

lieve in woman suffrage. He wants to be boss, for he does that every time."

What do you children call a bear like that? Greedy? Of course, and would you believe it, some men and women, and sometimes, even little boys and girls, are like that, though perhaps in a different way. What do you think of the boy who reaches for the largest piece of cake on the plate, or takes a whole handful of peanuts and stuffs them in his pocket when his friend offers him some, or how do you like the girl who takes the largest chocolate out of your box? But I know that none of my Juniors are like those children, and that, whatever animal you may imitate, it will not be the big brown bear. That is the story of one of the feeding-times at the Zoo.

XXV

THE REPTILE HOUSE

ON our trip to the Zoo, about which I spoke to you last week, we visited the Reptile House. Some people, you know, do not like snakes, and will not go in to see them, but there is nothing to be afraid of in the Zoo, for all the snakes are firmly secured in large glass cases like cabinets.

While there were other animals in the Reptile House such as mice, frogs, and alligators, the chief center of attraction was, of course, the snakes—big snakes, little snakes, snakes of all kinds and colors and sizes. The keepers of the Zoo have arranged the inside of the glass cases to correspond with the various surroundings from which the snakes came, so that they could feel perfectly at home. In some cases were grass and trees, and in others, rocks, pebbles, and sand.

As we passed one case we said, "Where are the snakes?" for none were in sight. We looked more closely, however, and saw them coiled up on the rocks on the side of a little hill, but their color so blended with the rocks

and sand that you could scarcely see them. We realized how necessary it would be to watch your steps as you went walking in the country from which these snakes came.

As we were examining the snakes in another case the door at the back of the case opened and a keeper, with a long-handled window cleaner, began to clean the inside of the windows of the case right over where the snakes were lying. As an occasional drop of water would fall, the snakes began to squirm, two or three of them becoming very angry. One in particular began swaying back and forth, his tongue darting out as his head rose higher and higher, preparing to strike the man. We thought the keeper did not see him, and were just about to cry out to warn him, "Look out!" when he quietly put his hand behind him, took a stick which he had in readiness, caught the snake on the little fork at the end of the stick and pushed him back in the corner. He did the same with the rest of the snakes who were troubling him, and then went on quietly washing the glass as if nothing had happened. We learned then the value of the Boy Scout motto, "Be Prepared."

On the next two or three cases, which enclosed the great pythons—the largest snakes in the world—there was pasted a sign, "Don't

tap on the glass." Why, do you suppose? I think it was because of the danger. If you tapped on the glass, it would annoy and anger the pythons, who were so large and strong that with one blow of their heads they could break the glass. Then what would you do? So the sign "Don't tap on the glass" was put up as a warning by the keepers, for they do not wish you to incur any unnecessary danger. I hope you will always obey it.

"Don't tap on the glass." Do not run into any unnecessary danger. That is pretty good advice to follow, boys and girls, not only in the Zoo but in all life. Of course when duty calls we must go, no matter where it is—God will protect us. But we must neither endanger our lives unnecessarily nor seek out temptation. The wise man of olden times had this in mind when he said, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass it by." That is a pretty long text to remember, but you can certainly remember the sign, "Do not tap on the glass."

THE THREE WISE MONKEYS

“Where truth in closest words shall fail
Truth embodied in a tale,
Shall enter in at lowly doors.”¹

—*Tennyson.*

¹ Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company from Tennyson's *Poetical Works*.

XXVI

SPEAK NO EVIL

(OBJECT: THE THREE JAPANESE MONKEYS)

I HOLD in my hand a group of three little Japanese monkeys. The first is covering his mouth with his hand, the second his eyes, the third his ears. Now, they represent three Japanese proverbs. Do any of you know what they are? Yes, "Speak no evil," "See no evil," "Hear no evil." This morning we are going to talk about the first, "Speak no evil."

Straws show which way the wind blows. So small things often show what a person is. There are persons, you know, who claim to read character by observing these little things. They will look at the lines in your hands and profess to read your fortune, but, while they may not be able to do this, they can, to a certain extent, read your character. The same thing is true with handwriting. A person's words also reveal his character. Even those who do not understand palmistry, or cannot tell character by handwriting, know this.

When you forget this Japanese proverb, and speak evil, it shows what kind of boys and girls you are down in your hearts, for Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"; that is, a man speaks what his heart is full of. Evil words, impure words, never come out of a pure heart. So the first thing we must do to refrain from evil speaking is to ask Jesus to change our hearts and make them clean.

But our words also have their influence upon our hearts. If you try so to live that no unkind words shall pass your lips, that will help to strengthen your heart. If you do not, then God will want to know why, for just after Jesus had spoken of the heart, he said, "For every idle word that man shall speak, he shall give account thereof." This is the second reason why we must be careful to speak no evil—we must give an account of it to God.

A third reason is that you cannot unsay evil words when you once say them, no matter how anxious you may be to do so.

The story is told of a woman who freely used her tongue to speak evil of others. Afterward she made confessions to her priest. In order to show her the terrible harm she had done, he bade her secure a ripe thistle-top

and then go out and scatter the seeds one by one. She did so. When she returned he told her, to her amazement, to go back and gather up the scattered seeds.

"That is impossible; no one can do that."

"No more can you," said the priest, "undo the evil thing you have done by speaking evil of others."

Will Carleton, the poet, has expressed that thought in a little poem, which I wish every one of you Juniors would commit to memory:

"Boys, flying kites, haul in their white-winged birds;
You can't do that when you are flying words.
Careful with fire is good advice we know;
Careful with words is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts, unexpressed, may sometimes fall back
dead,
But even God can't kill them once they're said."¹

One of the best ways I know of to keep from speaking evil is by doing just the opposite; that is, instead of saying mean things, cutting things, unkind things, say good things, kind things, pleasant things, until it becomes a habit.

Some people, you know, have formed the habit of always complaining and whining, and criticizing. In the home they criticize the food

¹ "The Settler's Story," from *Farm Festivals*, by Will Carleton. Copyrighted, 1898, by Harper & Brothers, New York. Used by permission.

or complain about this or that, also in school and at play. Others there are who have formed the habit of saying kind things, encouraging things, so that they do it without thinking. This is what Jesus did.

Thinking of what he said about idle words, I turned to my Bible and found this in regard to Jesus himself: "They marveled at his gracious words." Wouldn't it be a glorious thing if that were true of us—that men and women, boys and girls, marveled at our gracious words? Let us make it true. We can do it if we only ask Jesus to help us, and then follow his example.

"Kind words can never die,
Cherished and blest,
God knows how deep they lie
Stored in the breast;
Like childhood's simple rimes,
Said o'er a thousand times
Ay, in all years and climes,
Distant and near,
Kind words can never die,
No, never die."

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XXVII

SEE NO EVIL

(OBJECT: CAMERA AND THREE JAPANESE
MONKEYS)

OUR subject this morning is the Japanese proverb represented by the monkey covering his eyes with his hands.

You have all seen a camera like the one I hold in my hand. This is the lens—the eye of the camera—through which the picture of our object comes. This is the lever which uncovers the lens, just for an instant, so that the picture may be taken. Here at the back of the camera is the plate or film upon which the picture is taken. Now, if you were to examine the film immediately before and after taking the picture, you would see no difference in its appearance, but the photographer must take the film into a dark room where no rays of light can come, and put it in a bath of chemicals which brings out, or, as we say, develops the picture. Everything on the film, however, is reversed, so we call it the negative. Then the photographer places the negative upon a sensitive paper and exposes it to a strong

light, and lo! we have a correct picture of whatever the lens, the eye of the camera, saw.

Now, our eyes correspond to the lens in the camera. The brain corresponds to the film or plate upon which the picture is photographed. It is then stored up in the memory, which we may fitly describe as a chamber of imagery.

But how are the pictures developed? You cannot take them out as you do the films in a camera, and then go into a dark room and develop them. The process is much simpler than that. You develop the pictures that are photographed on the brain simply by thinking about them. The more you think about them, the clearer will the picture become and the deeper will the impression be made until it becomes permanent. So you see the need of the second Japanese proverb represented by the monkey which is covering his eyes with his hands, "See no evil."

Take care not to look upon anything that will do you harm. Do not go where evil pictures and evil things are, unless called by duty. Your parents will guide you until you are old enough to understand for yourself. If you do see things that are evil, as you will sometimes in public places, do not think about them, for, as I have just told you, think-

ing develops the picture and makes it permanent; but think of some of the other good pictures that are stored up in your memory—in your chamber of imagery—and ask Jesus to help you, and the bad picture will be blotted out.

“See no evil” is the Japanese proverb, and it is a good one to remember, but this morning I want to give you another one to remember with it—“See all that is good.” Look at some beautiful picture every day, or read some beautiful poem, or some word about Jesus, and then think about it until the picture is painted indelibly upon your memory. That is what Ruskin did. When he was a boy his father would never let him look at a poor picture or a bad picture, so he grew up to love the beautiful, and he became a great writer and authority upon art. He was one of the best judges of art in the world.

But while looking upon beautiful pictures do not forget to look through these windows of your chamber of imagery—your eyes—at the beautiful in nature, that is, the flowers, the grass, the trees, the birds, the stars, the clouds, the sunsets like the sunset we saw last night, then thank God for all these wonderful pictures he has painted for you to enjoy.

“See all that is good.” Yes, not only in nature, but in people as well. But that requires training. Just as you must train your eyes in order to shoot accurately, or to see good points in the picture, so you must train them to see the good things, the nice things, the pleasant things in the lives of men and women, boys and girls, even as Jesus did. So, in these various ways, store your memory—your chamber of imagery—with beautiful and good pictures. See no evil, see all that is good. And what the beggars in Corfu say to the travelers, so I would say to you, “May you enjoy your eyes.”

XXVIII

HEAR NO EVIL

(OBJECT: THE THREE JAPANESE MONKEYS)

THE third monkey, as you see, has his ears covered, representing the proverb, "Hear no evil."

Last Sunday morning I told you that we must train our eyes. In like manner our ears need educating. That is why Jesus said to his disciples, "Take heed how ye hear," "Take heed what ye hear."

Train yourselves to hear and life will mean so much more to you. A great many persons walk through the woods on a summer day, and they do not hear a single thing, but others hear all sorts of interesting sounds. They hear the rustling of the leaves in the breeze, the chattering of the squirrels, the songs of the birds and their "Chirp, chirp, chirp." Yes, they hear wonderful sounds such as the poet describes:

"Two little ears God gave to us,
Two little ears to hear
All the glad sounds this joyous world
Sends forth, so sweet and clear;

Songs of the birds and rippling streams,
 Music made all around;
 These little ears God gave to us
 Rejoice in every sound.”¹

Train your ears to hear accurately. “Take heed how ye hear.” One reason why we forget so soon is because we do not listen carefully. The words of our parents or our teachers “go in one ear and out the other.” We know how necessary it is in times of sickness to give heed how we hear, for a mistake then might mean death, death to ourselves or to others. So form the habit of listening carefully, of hearing accurately, in order that you may remember.

“Take heed what you hear.” This is where the Japanese proverb represented by the monkey covering his ears, applies. “Hear no evil.” There are two entrances to the memory, or chamber of imagery—one by the eye-gate, one by the ear-gate. So that no bad pictures may hang in that chamber of imagery, we must be careful of what we hear. “Hear no evil.”

“Hear no evil of others.” If we refused to listen to mean things, unkind things, evil things, people would soon stop saying them. As it takes two to make a quarrel, so it takes two to spread evil stories—a speaker and a

¹ Author unknown.

hearer. See to it that you are not the hearer. Cover your ears as this little monkey is doing, and say, "I will not listen to evil about others." "Hear no evil."

But this proverb also means that you must not listen when others suggest evil things for you to do. If Eve, in the Garden of Eden, had refused to listen to Satan, she would not have taken the forbidden fruit. You remember what Jesus did in the wilderness when Satan came tempting him. He said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." "Hear no evil."

Sometimes we cannot help hearing evil things. What then? Then you must close your hearts to the evil suggestion. There is an old proverb which says, "You cannot help birds flying around your head, but you can prevent them nesting in your hair." So, while you cannot always stop people saying evil things, you need not act upon them. Just offer a little prayer, "Lord Jesus, help me"; then think of something good you have heard. Learn beautiful poems; above all, learn as many Bible verses as possible, and you will never be left without something good to think about. So you will keep bad pictures from coming into your chamber of imagery through the ear-gate and you will "hear no evil."

BIRDS

The robin and the bluebird, piping loud,
Filled all the blossoming orchards with their glee;
The sparrows chirped as if they still were proud
Their race in Holy Writ should mentioned be.
And hungry crows, assembled in a crowd,
Clamored their piteous prayers incessantly,
Knowing who hears the raven's cry, and said:
"Give us, O Lord, this day, our daily bread!"¹
—*Longfellow.*

¹ From "The Birds of Killingworth." Used by permission of Houghton, Mifflin & Company.

XXIX

JESUS AND THE BIRDS

ONE summer recently a minister and his family spent their vacation in the Catskill Mountains. One of the most enjoyable of all their experiences was a bird class conducted by a student. Early every morning for two weeks, very early indeed, between twenty and thirty men, women, and children went out for a bird walk. What a wonderful time they had! Although it was the month of August, they saw twenty-three varieties of birds in one morning.

They learned many things on these walks, among others the need of training if one would know the birds—training of eye, because there are so many different kinds of birds, and, as a rule, you can only get a brief glimpse of them as they are flying by; training of the ear, because they all have different songs—some of them having more than one, like the song-sparrow for example, which has six different melodies in its repertoire. Indeed, they learned so many interesting things on those

“bird walks” that I thought you might enjoy hearing about some of them. I shall begin by talking to you about Jesus and the birds.

Jesus must have loved the birds. Though born in a city, he was brought up in the little country town of Nazareth. As a boy he spent much time exploring the country round, studying the birds and the flowers, and finding out the secrets of nature. He must have loved the out-of-door life, for when he began to preach and teach he told many stories about things he had seen and heard—the shepherd who looked for his lost sheep; the man who built his house on the sand, and when the storm came, it fell down; the red sky at night a sign of fair weather; in the morning—a sign of storm; and the birds that came and picked up the seed as it fell by the wayside.

Perhaps you would like to know the names of the birds of Jesus’ country, the birds he saw and heard? Some of them had feathers of red, blue, green, and gold; with lovely wings and breasts, and strange names—hoopoe, roller, bulbul, sunbird; but there were also birds that you know—the lark, robin redbreast, blackbird, wren, nightingale, thrush, swallow, eagle, raven, partridge, crow, and that most common of all birds, the English sparrow. Jesus must have seen many sparrows, for he

used them as an illustration for one of his sermons.

He had been warning his disciples of the dangers which threatened them from evil men, and he told them not to be afraid, God would protect them. "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny, and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father's notice?"

Now, the people in the Eastern countries catch sparrows in nets, and as there are thousands of them, sell them very cheaply indeed for food; but in spite of that fact, God knows each one.

"I know there are many sparrows;
All over the world we're found;
But our heavenly Father knoweth
When one of us falls to the ground.

'Though small, we are never forgotten,
Though weak, we are never afraid;
For we know that the dear Lord keepeth
The life of the creatures he made."

So Jesus would have his disciples remember that as God cares for the sparrows and all other birds, so he will care for them too, for he is their Father.

It was a terrible storm at sea, and all the people on the ship were very much alarmed, with the exception of one little girl.

“Aren’t you afraid?” some one asked her.

“Why, no,” she said. “My Father is at the helm.”

So we need never be afraid. God our Father is watching over us, and as he took care of that little girl, and as he takes care of the birds, he will take care of us.

XXX

SPARROWS

LAST Sunday we heard how God takes care of the sparrows, and though there are many thousands of them all over the world, not one falls to the ground without his notice. Wouldn't you like to hear more about them?

All of them are dressed in dull, brownish colors, more or less streaked with gray—colors which harmonize with the grassy, bushy places or dusty roadsides where they live. This, of course, makes it more difficult for their enemies to see them. In size they are mostly small birds—not one as large as a robin. The sparrows are seed-eating birds and can find food all the year round, so that their migrations are short. They do a great deal of good by destroying the seeds of weeds which otherwise would overrun the farmer's fields and gardens. There are many varieties of sparrows, the chief ones—vesper, chipping, English, and song.

You will see the vesper sparrow chiefly on the dusty roadsides, and you can always tell him by the white on each side of his tail as he spreads it out to fly. He received his name

because he has formed the habit of singing toward evening, just after the sun goes down behind the purple hills, and a very sweet voice he has too.

The chipping sparrow—"little chippy," as we call him—you will recognize by his chestnut crown and the white line through his eye.

He is the smallest of all sparrows, but so very sociable and friendly. He frequently builds his nest in the trees near the house, or in the orchard, and eats great quantities of insects and worms.

But what shall I say about the English sparrow? Everybody, both in the country and the city, knows him, and few like him. He was first introduced into this country in 1851, to rid some shade-trees in Brooklyn of inch-worms. But as conditions which keep the English sparrow in check in his own land are lacking here, he has gained in numbers at such a rapid rate that he is found in all parts of our land, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and has become a pest. He is bold, impudent, quarrelsome, and a great bully, especially with smaller birds. Nobody, whether man or bird, wants him around.

How different this from the song sparrow, the children's favorite! Many times have I seen him on a tree, a fence, a telegraph wire,

looking up into heaven and pouring forth his song so full of joy and gladness. He seems to be always cheerful, no matter what the weather is. No wonder we like him, for good spirits are contagious, and he cheers and encourages us when we need it most. Dr. Henry van Dyke says about his song:

“I like the tune, I like the words;
They seem so true, so free from art,
So friendly, and so full of heart,
That if but one of all the birds
Could be my comrade everywhere,
My little brother of the air,
This is the one I'd choose, my dear,
Because he'd bless me, every year,
With '*Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer!*' ”¹

Which of the sparrows would you rather be like, children, the English sparrow or the song sparrow—the English sparrow, which is selfish, quarrelsome, and noisy, or the song sparrow, which everybody loves because he is so cheerful and makes us feel happy and glad just to listen to him?

Some time ago I read of a little boy who was like a song sparrow in his influence, though he was very delicate in health. One day as he was looking out upon a very beautiful sun-

¹ *Poems*, by Henry van Dyke. Used by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

set, he cried out, "Oh, mother! how I would like to help God paint the sky!" His mother replied, "You are making the sky of my life very, very bright."

Let us pray God to help us be like the song sparrow, then we, too, will make the sky of the lives of others very, very bright.

XXXI

THE ROBIN

“ ‘Who killed Cock Robin?’
‘I,’ said the Sparrow—
‘With my bow and arrow
I killed Cock Robin.’ ”

OUR American robin is much larger than the European cock robin, about which we have heard so much. When the first English colonists came to this country they saw this big cheerful bird and they called him a “robin” because of his red breast. It reminded them of the wee little bird at home. He is first cousin to the thrush, and is a good singer. Like the thrush, he never walks, but hops, though sometimes you see him running across the lawns.

The robins build their nests very early in the spring. They gather some coarse grass, roots, and leaves for a foundation and then cover it all over with mud. Then they line the nest with dead grass. Sometimes, however, a heavy rain comes and washes away their nest in the night, and they have to build it all over again.

What a wonderful appetite the robin has! Just think of eating every day more than we weigh. That is why father-robin and mother-robin work so hard to find food for themselves and the little robins. You have seen them, I am sure, pulling earth-worms out of your lawn. They seem to know just where the worms are. They run a few steps, listen, take two or three steps to the right or the left, stick their bills in the earth, give a tug, and out comes the worm. It is estimated that a pair of robins, with a family to feed, will pull out enough worms in one day to make a line fourteen feet long. But they eat other things besides worms. In the spring they catch a great many insects which would destroy our fruit and vegetables, and for that reason we ought not to begrudge them the few cherries they eat in the summer.

In September the robins gather in friendly groups and roam around, feeding on all kinds of berries. Do you know what they do with the seeds? No, they do not swallow them, but they drop them as they fly around, and many seeds take root and grow into shrubs and trees. So you see, the robins help to make the earth beautiful by observing Arbor Day every day.

Many interesting legends have grown up around the robin. A legend, boys and girls,

is a story that has been handed down to us from long, long ago. One of the legends tells us that Jesus used to feed robins around his mother's door when he was a boy. I can quite believe it, because robins become very tame when you feed them and grow to be very fond of you, as you are of them, with their sweet, melodious songs. We know that Jesus was kind to all birds and animals. So the legend tells us that when they placed Jesus in the tomb, a robin never left it until he rose again, and when he went up into heaven, a robin joined in the angels' song.

Another very popular story is that when Jesus was on his way to Calvary, toiling beneath the burden of the cross, a robin, in the kindness of his heart, plucked a thorn from the crown of Jesus, and a drop of blood from Jesus' brow fell upon his breast, and ever since the robin has had a red breast. I think that is a beautiful story, don't you? Whether it is true or not, it shows the disposition of the robin. A robin would have taken off the crown of thorns if he could, just as another story tells us, one covered the poor babes in the woods with leaves. Wouldn't you like the people to tell beautiful stories about you because of your kindness of heart? Learn the Boy Scout motto, "One kind turn every day."

XXXII

CEDAR WAXWING, OR THE POLITE BIRD

FROM the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific from Canada to Mexico, you will find the cedar waxwing. He is called the "cedar waxwing" because he is very fond of cedar berries. Sometimes he is called the cherry-bird, because he likes cherries also. On his wings are small red spots like sealing wax, which are responsible for the queer name of "waxwing."

He wears a fine silky, soft, grayish-brown dress, almost dovelike in color, and is always very neat and well groomed. His beautiful pointed crest and the yellow band across the end of his tail will enable you to distinguish him easily from other birds.

The cedar waxwing is a very sociable bird. He is rarely ever alone but always with other birds. I have already said that he feeds on cedar berries. Like the robin, he drops the seeds all around and so helps to make the earth beautiful. In addition, he likes insects, elm-beetles, grubs, and caterpillars. The far-

mer may grumble and scold when the cedar waxwing eats his cherries, but he can stand the loss of a few cherries, because he will have more and better apples, for the cedar waxwing eats up the little green canker-worms which destroy the orchards.

When the cedar waxwings arrive in your neighborhood there are no noisy chatterings, but they come very quietly, for they are gentle and refined in manners. That is why we call them the "polite birds." They are so courteous, having the same nice manners at home as abroad. Our bird-guide told us of a friend of his, who saw five or six cedar waxwings sitting in a row on a fence, when the end bird caught a grub. He very courteously passed it to the next bird, and he to the next, and so it went right down the line, until it came to the last bird, who quietly ate it.

You know I found it very difficult to believe that story until the other day, when I read a similar story by Thornton W. Burgess, who writes the nature stories, only in this instance, it was a fine, red cherry. "Peter Rabbit laughed right out when he saw it. 'Never in my life have I seen such politeness,' he said."

The cedar waxwing is not only polite, but he is very kind and cares for the young birds

very tenderly. The father-bird brings in dainties to the mother and helps her feed her little ones. Moreover, the cedar birds are very good to orphans. I heard recently the story of a lady who was watching a nest of robins, when one day the father- and mother-birds failed to appear. Apparently some one had killed them, and she was much troubled to know how she could get to the high nest and feed the young robins who were calling for their dinner, when she saw a cedar bird fly up and feed them. She watched very carefully after that, and every day the cedar bird fed the nestlings and took care of them until they could fly. Many similar stories have been told us of these kind birds.

So, children, I want you always to be kind to the cedar bird—the polite bird—and protect him from all danger, not only because he saves the elms by eating elm-beetles, but also because he has set us the example of being courteous and kind.

XXXIII

THE BUSY BIRD—JENNY WREN

GOOD morning, Jenny Wren! Haven't you met her yet? She is the little brown bird who is so excitable and yet afraid of nothing. The color—soft-brown with bars of another shade—so harmonizes with the ground that you can scarcely see the wrens, but they have a way of holding up their tails so that you will always know them.

The wrens like to build their nests in snug little holes in stumps and trees; but if you will make a little house for them, they will come and live in it. Take a little box and nail it up under the eaves of the barn, chicken-house, grape-arbor, or in the orchard. Make a little opening, about an inch in diameter for the wren to enter; not larger, for if you do, the English sparrow will go in and take possession. The wrens will furnish the box themselves. They will pay good rent for the house too, because they will destroy a large number of insects on your place—grasshoppers, bugs, beetles, caterpillars, grubs, worms—nobody can tell just how many. So, you see, it is to your

interest to encourage the wrens to build near your house, for they will kill all these insects for you, and, in addition, sing their beautiful songs.

Have you ever seen them build their nests? They do not use mud, as the robin does, but fine twigs; and the funny thing about it is that they do not seem to know when they have enough twigs. They keep stuffing them in the hole or box, until they can scarcely get in themselves. How hard they work! You never saw such busy birds in your life! Then, too, they sing almost all the time. Sometimes they sing so hard that they shake all over, so in earnest are they. Yes, and if you come near the nest, they will scold just as hard. Whatever they do, they do with all their might.

That is the lesson I want you to learn this morning from Jenny Wren, the busy bird. "Work while you work, and play while you play." The wise man who wrote the book of Proverbs, warns us against the sluggard, the slothful man, that is, the lazy man. When you ask him to do anything, he says, "No, I can't, there's a lion in the way." Yes, it is the lazy man's lion, but you are not afraid of him, are you? Of course not, for the lazy man's lion is just an excuse to get out of work.

So instead of being like the sluggard, who says "There is a lion in the way," you are going to be like little Jenny Wren, the busy bird, and practice your music and study your lessons with all your might. You are going to be busy about the right things, the good things, as Jesus was. Then, when you grow up, and look back upon your life, you will say, "I am so glad I learned about Jenny Wren, the busy bird."

XXXIV

THE BAD BIRD—BLACKY THE CROW

EVERYONE knows the American crow, even though he knows but few other birds. His large size, his black coat, and his call of "Caw! caw! caw!" make him easily remembered. Some people think he is the most knowing bird in America. Certainly he is one of the cleverest. More than once a crow has been seen rising in the air with a clam in his claws, dropping it on a rock to open the shell, and then swooping down to feast on its contents. Yet we think we can frighten away such birds from the corn with a scarecrow! Why, sometimes they eat the corn all around the scarecrow and nowhere else, just to show us what they think of our stupidity!

Crows live in towns, or rookeries, as they are called, except when they are nesting. Sometimes thousands come together in a single roost, which is usually a pine grove.

They are thoroughly organized, having their leaders, which correspond to the generals and captains in the army, and also their sentinels who give warning of the approach of danger. Perhaps, as you were going through the woods,

you have seen two crows suddenly rise up and begin to caw loudly. Then there would be answering caws in the distance. The two were sentinels giving warning of your approach.

The crows have regular hours too. Regularly at sundown they return to their camps from miles around. Indeed, they have more regular hours than many children—they go to bed earlier and get lots of beauty sleep.

But how mischievous they are! As a boy, I had a tame magpie, which was a great thief, stealing especially thimbles and other small articles. I have often wondered why magpies were such thieves, but since I have learned they are first cousins to the crow I am not surprised.

There is no end to the stories told about tame crows. One that I read of liked to get out into the yard when the clothes were hung out on the line and pull out every clothespin, carrying each one to the roof and laying it safely away. Of course that would let the wet garment fall in the dirt. He was well scolded for his mischief, and then he would fly to the roof and throw every one down to the ground again.

The crow is not all bad, though he steals the farmer's corn so that the farmer gets very angry and shoots him; he stuffs himself and

his family with thousands of grubs, insects, grasshoppers, May beetles, mice, and other small creatures which do the crops lots of damage. Indeed, some claim that he does far more good than harm, and cases have been known where he has saved the country from a plague of grubs or insects.

But you see, children, when you get the reputation of being bad, it is very difficult to get rid of it. At least that is what Blacky, the crow, finds. And I am sorry to say that in spite of the good he does, that in spite of his kindness to his own little fledglings, he is a bad, bad bird. Sometimes I think his heart is as black as his feathers, because he not only eats the farmers' chickens, very young turkeys, and eggs, but—what is even worse—the eggs and babies of the song birds which we love. Yes, Mr. Crow is a bad, bad bird.

As we come to the close of our study of the birds, I hope you have been so interested that you will now study them for yourselves. Do not forget the lessons you have learned from the sparrow, the robin, the polite bird, the busy bird, and the bad bird. Above all, do not forget what Jesus taught us, that just as God cares for the birds, so that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowing it, so will he care for us, his children.

FLOWERS

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies.
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

—*Tennyson*.¹

¹ Reprinted by permission of the Macmillan Company, from Tennyson's *Poetical Works*.

XXXV

THE PANSY

EVERYBODY loves flowers. All over the world, in India, Persia, China, and Japan, and the various countries of Europe as well as in America, you will find the children so happy when they can go out into the garden or into the woods to gather flowers.

What a desolate world this would be without flowers! Why, the flowers are the stars of the earth, just as the stars are the flowers of heaven. I think that the poet Longfellow must have had this in mind, when he said:

“In the infinite meadows of heaven
Blossom the lovely stars,
The forget-me-nots of the angels.”

An old legend tells us that at one time flowers could speak, but, because of some trouble, they became dumb. I think the evil spirit's spell must be broken now. The flowers are speaking to us all the time. On the next few Sundays I am going to tell you some things they say.

I start with the pansy—one of my favorite

flowers. To me it is one of the most beautiful flowers. What a lovely face it has, so frank, so full of welcome and good cheer, that one feels like sitting down beside a bed of pansies just to listen to what they have to say! What do they say?

First, pansies are for thoughts. What kind of thoughts? Why, good thoughts, kind thoughts, of course. So the first thing the pansy says to you, is "Be careful of your thoughts." By and by your thoughts will reveal themselves in your face. People will be able to tell what kind of thoughts you have and what kind of boys and girls you are. The Scripture says that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." You see, your thoughts work themselves out in deeds, for "sow a thought, reap a word, sow a word, reap a deed." Therefore,

"Be careful how you work
Your pansy bed of thoughts;
For as the soul begins to think,
So will its deeds be wrought."

Secondly, the pansy says, "Be friendly." Some flowers, like the Easter lily, are so stately and dignified that you do not dare to touch them. You look at them in admiration from a distance. But the pansies are so dif-

ferent. They are the most friendly of all the flowers God has given us. The poor, as well as the rich, can grow them. They are to-day in hundreds of poor homes. In all parts of New York city you will find window boxes full of pansies; they come early in the spring and continue to bloom until the fall; we like to have them in our rooms when we are ill. Some one has said: "They are the angel eyes of a million sick rooms." Yes, the pansies are friendly.

To help you remember these two messages of the pansies I want to tell you a little story I once read. A charming little flower, growing in a glen, was so modest that she slipped into the shadow of a tall leaf before opening her blossoms. The little gold and purple beauty shed her delicate perfume and kept on blooming in this hidden nook, and no one saw her, until one day an angel from heaven was flying by. This angel had been sent to the earth on a special errand, and as her long, white wings, by chance, brushed aside the tall leaf, the angel saw the blossoms of purple and gold and inhaled the exquisite, delicate perfume.

"What a lovely flower!" cried the angel. "You are too lovely to grow unseen in the shadows. You are worthy to bloom in the garden of heaven. But wait, even better than

that! You shall be the angels' blossoms in the land of man. Go, sweet pansy, bloom in every land. Carry to all people sweet thoughts of love and peace."

The angel stooped to kiss the little flower; and, wonderful to relate, from the little blossom, a tiny angel face looked out. Haven't you seen it there? The next time you see a pansy bed remember to look for the angel faces and think of the gentle angel whose kiss was kindness and love.

XXXVI

THE CARNATION

(MOTHER'S DAY)

LONG years ago, in southern Europe, there grew wild a little flower in the crags overlooking the sea. Very few people ever saw it, except possibly some boys and girls occasionally as they gathered wild flowers, just as we gather wild flowers to-day.

But one day a bird plucked its seed and flew away to England and deposited it in the rich soil there. It began to grow, and one who loved flowers and understood them discovered it and saw in it wonderful possibilities of development. So he took it home and began to cultivate it. Others did the same, and now there are three hundred varieties of this wild pink—for that was the name of this little flower.

Its name, to-day, is "Carnation," and there are few flowers more beautiful or more lasting. To some it is the most beautiful flower that grows. The late President McKinley was very fond of the carnation; indeed, it was

his favorite flower, and he seldom was seen without one in the lapel of his coat. Very often, when he saw a boy or girl looking at the carnation with longing eyes, he would give the flower with a smile. At one time a mother took her boy to see the sights of the White House. Of course he was very anxious to see the President, as every boy is. When the mother spoke to the guard, he replied, "Mr. McKinley is very fond of children and I am sure he would be glad to shake hands with your boy." So the mother and her son were presented to the President. The President spoke very kindly to the boy and then gave him the carnation from his lapel, expressing the hope as he did so, that he might grow up to be a great honor to his parents.

This is the flower that has been chosen for Mother's Day, and thousands of people all over the country will wear either a pink carnation in honor of the mother who is still alive, or a white carnation in honor of a mother who has gone to heaven.

But what does the carnation say to us? For what does it stand in the language of the flowers?

First, it represents courtesy. The great poet Shakespeare describes it as "The very pink of courtesy," using the old-fashioned

name. So, as we wear the carnation on Mother's Day, it says to us, "Be courteous—be courteous at home as well as at school or in society." So many boys and girls, you know—yes, and some grown-ups as well—think they can say and do anything at home. They never say "Please" or "Thank you," and they even forget to stand up when mother enters the room. So, to-day, the carnation, which we are wearing in honor of mother, says to us, "Be courteous at home among those whom you love."

But the carnation also says to us, "Show your love for your mother, not only once a year by wearing me, but by being obedient, kind, and thoughtful the whole year through."

A little girl was trudging along with a pail of water. "So many times had she passed our gate that morning," says the lady who was telling the story, "that curiosity prompted us to say, 'You are a very busy little girl to-day.' 'Yes'm.' The round face under the broad hat turned toward me. It was freckled and perspiring, but cheerful. 'Yes'm, it takes a heap of water to do a washing.'

"'And do you bring it all from the brook down there?'

"'Oh, we have a cistern mostly, only it's been dry lately.'

“‘And is there nobody else to carry the water?’

“‘Nobody but mother, and she’s washing.’

“‘Well, you are a good girl to help her.’

“I intended to compliment her when I said that, but she turned to me with a look of surprise in her gray eyes, and an almost indignant tone in her voice, as she answered: ‘Why, of course, I help her to do things all the time. She hasn’t anybody else. Mother’n I are partners!’ ”

If you and mother are partners, boys and girls, every day will be Mother’s Day.

XXXVII

THE LILY

GOD loves beauty, and, if what Abraham Lincoln says is true, that "God must love the common people because he made so many of them," we know he must love the flowers because there are so many of them. Some one has said that "God smiled on the earth, and the earth smiled back in flowers." One of these flowers was the lily.

The lily family is so large that it is difficult to state just where it begins and where it ends. It has various colors—white, orange, buff, red, and crimson. It is also very old. If you go back to ancient times—very ancient times—you will find the lily carved on the pillars of the temples. In Eastern countries they still use the dried lily for food. I am told that if you boil or roast it, it loses its bitter taste and becomes sweet.

I want to speak this morning of the white lily. We think of three different kinds—a large lily like the Easter or calla lily, the lily of the valley, and the water lily.

The calla lily comes originally from South

America and is a very common cultivation. The Easter lily, which we use so much at Easter time, comes from Bermuda, and is familiar to you all. The lily of the valley is not the lily mentioned in the Bible, but it is a beautiful little flower which grows in our gardens. The water lily, as you know, grows on ponds and lakes. We may fittingly call it "the queen of the water" as it floats majestically on the surface of the water in a field of waxy green leaves. At night the water lily folds her petals and sinks out of sight to rise again in the morning. A pretty Indian legend recalls the origin of the flower in a falling star, which, when striking the water, was changed into the water lily.

There are two qualities in these three different kinds of lilies which I have mentioned that I think of whenever I look at them—their purity and their sweetness.

First, their purity. White stands for purity, you know. "Keep thyself pure" the lily is always saying to us, and I hope that we will listen to its voice. Some time you will hear it said of a certain person, "His was the whitest soul ever known; he was the flower of a blameless life." Do you know that men can never say anything about you more beautiful than that? So the lily is God's messenger in white,

come to sing to us from morning until night her song of purity.

Then, of all flowers the lily, especially the water lily, is one of the most fragrant. As white suggests purity, so fragrance suggests kindness. Paul, the apostle, has said that "kindness to each other is an odor of a sweet smell pleasing to God." Yes, fragrance or kindness is surely a worthy object in life. That is what we ought to try to do, to diffuse fragrance by what we say and what we do.

This little story will explain what I mean. A Quaker lady and a little girl were sitting together in a car when the little girl said to the old lady, who was an entire stranger to her, "Do let me kiss you."

"Yes, my dear, certainly," was the reply.

Then they began to talk to each other, and a very firm friendship began. One day, afterward, the girl said, "Were you surprised that day, when I asked you to let me kiss you?"

"Oh, no, dear," she replied, "they often ask me that."

You see, children, the purity and sweetness of her life shone from her face and made her so winsome that people could not help wishing to kiss her. Some people are just the opposite—they repel you instead of attracting you.

So I want you to remember, whenever you see the lily, that you also are put here to become beautiful in every part of your life. Ask the Lord Jesus to help you make your life a garden where grow the flowers of God—purity, sweetness, love, joy, and peace.

XXXVIII

THE POPPY

(MEMORIAL SUNDAY)

YESTERDAY wherever you went, you saw poppies for sale, and to-day, Memorial Sunday, and next Tuesday, Memorial Day, hundreds and thousands of people will wear the poppy in honor of our soldier boys.

Do you know why the poppy has been chosen as the Memorial-Day flower? Because it grew so plentifully in Flanders and in France, where so many of the battles of the World War were fought. So our boys learned to love it.

The poppy family is not quite so large as the lily family, but still there are several members of it. There are the double poppies which grow in our gardens, and the single poppies which grow wild in the fields where they seem to be so much at home. The petals, you notice, are just like little skirts, especially when they blow in the wind. All the poppies, however, do not wear scarlet skirts, for some are white, some are purplish blue, and some are bright yellow. In far-off India they grow great fields of poppies in order to use the juice

for making a kind of medicine. So, you see, the poppies are useful as well as ornamental.

Whenever you see poppies growing, whether in the gardens, or in the fields, they are always playing with the breezes. Somehow they seem so happy and cheerful. Red, you know, is a cheerful color, whether it be decorating a room or in mother's hat. I think that one reason why our soldiers like the poppy is because it has such a cheerful appearance.

One of the chaplains wrote home during the war, describing how one evening he was riding back from the front line into the country and he marveled at the beauty of the landscape. His way lay through countless acres of cornland. By and by he came to the second line of defense. Millions of feet of barbed wire had been twisted into an impassable network of spikes. If the front line gave way, then the soldiers could retire behind the barbed wire and the enemy pursuing them would be caught on the spikes. But, he said, this evening, to his great surprise, the barbed wire was a mass of green and scarlet, where the grass had grown unchecked and innumerable poppies lifted up their heads to cover with beauty the ugly and threatening spikes. In the little cemetery, near at hand, poppies were fluttering their crimson wings over every grave. And

it all had such a happy, cheerful appearance that no one would have dreamed that a terrible war was going on just a short distance away.

The poppy, then, stands for cheerfulness, and I think it is a most appropriate Memorial-Day flower for this reason, because all who saw the soldier boys and associated with them spoke of their cheerfulness under difficulties and hardships. In the rain, the cold and the mud, they joked, whistled, and sang. Of course sometimes they were sad and discouraged, but they would encourage each other by singing,

“Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag,
And smile, smile, smile!”

So the poppy says, “Be cheerful even though you do not feel like it.”

Then, too, the scarlet poppy is a most appropriate flower for Memorial Day because of its color. Just as in our flag, so here the red stands for blood and sacrifice. And when you wear this poppy on Memorial Day I want you to remember the boys who suffered and died in France for our country and for us, and ask God to help you grow up to be worthy citizens of this country for which they gave their lives.

XXXIX

THE FORGET-ME-NOT

(COMMUNION)

THE forget-me-not is a sweet, bonnie flower. Like the pansy, it is a garden flower and blossoms all through the summer. But, unlike the pansy, it also grows wild in low, marshy soil on the banks of streams. It is different from the pansy in that its leaves grow right on the stems of the flowers, which seem to look up at one so trustingly with their blue eyes.

Did you notice the shape of the leaves? The ancient Greeks called this flower "mouse's ear," because they said the leaf looked like a mouse's ear. But we like our own name best—"forget-me-not."

We have been listening the last few Sundays to what the various flowers tell us and trying to understand their language. Now, in their language, the forget-me-not stands for true love and constancy, just as the white lily stood for purity.

Listen to this story which comes to us from far-off Persia:

"One morning, when the world was very

young, an angel sat outside the gates of paradise weeping.

“‘Why do you weep?’ asked another angel who passed that way. ‘The world is so beautiful and paradise near.’

“‘But I cannot enter paradise for a long time,’ said the weeping angel.

“‘Why not?’ asked the other. ‘It is only a few steps to the gate.’

“‘Then the angel who wept pointed to the earth where a maiden was stooping over the grasses by the side of a stream.

“‘Do you see those tiny blue flowers she is planting? How like her they are! So dainty and each with blue eyes and a heart of gold! Now, I love that maiden, but, because she is an earth-maiden, they would not allow us to enter paradise together, and I cannot, will not go in without her. So they gave her a task to perform and when she has completed it, she may enter in with me. And that task is, that she must plant a little blue flower in every corner of the earth. That is why I sit and weep.’

“‘But I know of a better plan than that,’ said the other angel, and he whispered it in his ear.

“‘Then the angel who wept flew down to the earth where the maiden was planting these

dainty flowers. He went down to help her, and hand in hand they wandered over the earth until they had planted the little blue flowers everywhere. Then, when the task was finished, with the wreaths of forget-me-nots all about them, the angel took the gentle earth-maiden and flew with her to the gates of paradise which swung wide open to them."

But how did the forget-me-not receive its present name? That is a very interesting story. It is told in a little poem.

"When to the flowers so beautiful,
The Father gave a name,
Back came a little blue-eyed one
All timidly it came;

"And, standing at its Father's feet,
And gazing in his face,
It said, in low and trembling tones,
And with a modest grace,

" 'Dear God, the name thou gavest me,
Alas, I have forgot.'
Kindly the Father looked on him
And said, 'Forget me not.' "

That is what God is saying to us every day, not only through this beautiful little blue flower, but through all the other flowers as well. Then, too, there are many reminders

of God's love and care all about us which are saying the same thing. The beautiful sky with the wonderful clouds which God hath made, says, "Forget me not." The stars, which Longfellow called the "forget-me-nots of the angels," are saying, "Forget me not." The food which God hath given our parents strength to provide for us, is saying, "Forget me not." How many of you heard the church bell this morning? Do you know what it said? It said, "Come to church and worship me; forget me not." And the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which we observe this morning, says, "Forget me not." The bread stands for the body of Jesus, and the wine for his blood. They are to remind us of his death on the cross. Every time we partake of this sacrament it says: "Forget me not—forget not that I loved you so much that I died for you. I want you to love and serve me in return."

That is what God is saying to us to-day through this little blue flower.

XL

THE DAISY AND ITS BIG BROTHER (CHILDREN'S DAY)

WHAT is this simple round flower with its white collar and golden heart? Why, the daisy, of course! Everyone knows the daisy, for from May till November the fields, meadows, and roadsides are just covered with daisies.

The daisy is, above all others, the children's flower. Every girl and many of the boys have, I am sure, made daisy chains at some time or another. Not only do children make daisy chains, for during the annual graduation exercises of Vassar College the young women carry the famous daisy chain—a rope made from many thousands of daisies. It is one of the most beautiful parts of their graduation exercises. On Memorial Day the school children make wreaths of daisies to decorate the soldiers' graves, and, of course, no Children's Day is complete without them.

Then you can play games with the daisies. Did you ever see the girls pluck away the petals, one by one, to determine what kind of a husband they will have?

“Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief,
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief.”

Yes, the daisy belongs to the children, who love it.

Do you know the daisy has a big brother? He looks like him too, only he is fifty times bigger. Sometimes he grows to be seven feet tall. His yellow collar is made up of many petals arranged just like the daisy's white collar, and his heart is also round just like the daisy's, and both of them reach up toward the sunshine. Who knows the name of the daisy's big brother? That's right! The sunflower! It is called the “sunflower” because it always looks toward the sun, no matter in what part of the heavens the sun may be.

But what do the daisy and his big brother have to say? We have listened to the other flowers, and surely they too have a message for us on this Children's Day. Yes, they tell us we must be happy and contented, and try to make the world beautiful wherever we are, just as they do. They grow not only in the field and in the meadow but on the roadside where the ground is very hard and stony, and away up on the side of the mountain where no other flowers will grow. We do not notice the rocks, however, when the daisies are there

with their sweet smiles, but we say to each other: "How lovely these daisies are! I am awfully glad I saw them." Now you children can be like that.

"If I a little girl could be,
Well—just like you,
With lips so rosy, cheeks as fair,
Such eyes of blue, and shining hair,
What do you think I'd do?

"I'd wear so bright and sweet a smile,
I'd be so loving all the while,
I'd be so helpful with my hand,
So quick and gentle to command,
You soon would see,
That everyone would turn to say,
'Tis good to meet that child to-day.'
Yes, yes, my dear; that's what I'd do,
If I were you."¹

But, bright-eyed daisy, won't you tell us, please, how we can always be happy and contented like you?

"Yes," replies the daisy. "Do like my big brother and I, and always keep your hearts open toward the sunshine."

How can we do that? By coming to church and Sunday school to learn about Jesus, for he is our sunshine. He is the "Light of the

¹ Independent. Used by permission.

world," and when he comes into our hearts with his love he makes us so happy that we want others to know about him and be happy too.

That is why on Children's Day we give our money to build Sunday schools so that other boys and girls who never before had the opportunity—and there are many of them in our country—may learn about Jesus too and have sunshine in their hearts.

XLI

THE ROSE

THE rose is one of the best known of all flowers. Men have sung its praises in many languages, from long, long ago until now—Egyptians, Greeks, Romans of olden times, and Turks, Frenchmen, Italians, Britishers, and Americans of modern times. One legend says it actually came down from heaven, it is so beautiful.

The rose is also famous for its fragrance. One of the most costly perfumes in the world is attar of roses, made from rose petals—and, by the way, it takes ten tons, twenty thousand pounds, of rose petals to make one pound of this precious oil. What a wonderful flower the rose is, and how we love it! So this morning, I want to talk to you about it.

First, see this bud. It looks so small and insignificant, does it not? It scarcely seems possible that out of this tiny bud will come the beautiful rose. Yet it is true. So in every child there is promise of a noble and good life. Any one of you boys may grow up to be a second George Washington, or an Abraham

Lincoln, or a Theodore Roosevelt, and any one of you girls a second Martha Washington or a Florence Nightingale.

But what are these thorns which prick one so? Of what use are they? Well, scientists tell us that they help to sustain the shrub in the midst of other plants and shrubs, also that they act as a sort of protection against thieves. If we are in any danger of getting our hands all full of thorns, we are not so apt to pick them. It means some trouble and often much discomfort for us if we would pick this beautiful flower.

"There is no rose without a thorn," so an old saying runs. Certainly that is true of life, boys and girls. You will find as you grow older that everything really worth having in this world is gotten by some pain. The lessons are sometimes hard, and it seems as if that problem in arithmetic would never be solved, and you throw down your book in disgust. But never give in. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Remember that there is no rose without a thorn, no success without perseverance.

Perhaps you have noticed that at certain times the gardener goes out with his shears or his knife and prunes the rose tree. Why? Won't that kill it? Not if done properly, for

the strange fact is, that it will grow all the better. The weaker a rose tree is, the more they prune it, to make it grow stronger.

Sometimes, boys and girls, you wonder why father and mother find it necessary to discipline you. You don't like to be punished. You don't like to do the hard things. You don't like to be kept indoors while the other children are playing. But some day you will understand that all of this was necessary, and that your fathers and mothers loved you even when they punished you. And you will grow up better men because your parents, or your teachers, disciplined you, just as the rose tree grows better when the gardener prunes it.

If you have ever kept rose trees, you will know that there are certain enemies you have to fight against all the time if you would have the rose tree grow. Perhaps one of the most common and dangerous is a little green fly (*Aphis Rosæ*). It robs the plant of its sap, and does a vast amount of injury.

One reason why this fly is so dangerous is because it multiplies so fast. One scientist has shown that there may be as many as six millions in five generations from one female fly. Then again this fly is dangerous because it takes on the color of the tree to avoid detection. For example, if the tree is green, then

the fly becomes green. So it may do a great deal of mischief before it is discovered.

We all have lots of little enemies to fight against. We call them "little sins." They may not seem to be very much—just one act of disobedience, just one wrong word, taking only one penny that does not belong to us, one dishonest thought—but unless they are overcome, they will grow and increase just like the enemies of the rose tree, and before we know it we are in their power. Beware of the first little sin!

So, if you prune the rose tree when it is necessary, drive away its enemies, and last but not least, see that it gets lots of sunshine, then it will grow and blossom, and bring joy and gladness into many lives. Shall we try to make our lives beautiful and helpful, and like the rose be God's messengers to the world?

PART THREE

SPECIAL DAYS

“What hath this day deserved, what hath it done,
That it in golden letters should be set
Among the high tides in the calendar?”

—*Shakespeare.*

XLII

GEORGE WASHINGTON, THE CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN

(WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY)

A LITTLE boy, when being held up to see President Washington, exclaimed, "Why, he is only a man!" Washington, hearing this, smiled at the child, "Yes, dear, that is all."

In years gone by, historians, in their endeavor to show respect and admiration for George Washington and what he did, represented him as more than a man. Yet he was a man, just as Abraham Lincoln, and, while he did not tell funny stories as did Lincoln, those who knew him best loved him. He was not only "first in war, first in peace," but also, "first in the hearts of his countrymen." This morning I want to speak to you about him as a man and as a Christian gentleman.

A gentleman is always clean and neat in personal appearance. He is courteous, and above all, he is kind and thoughtful of others. George Washington met all of these requirements. When he was a boy he studied with

the Reverend Mr. Marye, a former Huguenot minister, who took a few pupils in Latin, French, and deportment. He taught them one hundred and eighteen rules of deportment. Just think, boys and girls, of having to learn one hundred and eighteen rules of behavior. Here are some of them:

“Keep your nails and teeth clean, without showing any great concern for them.”

“Only undertake what you can perform, and be careful to keep your promise.”

“Speak not evil of the absent one, for it is unjust.”

“Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called ‘conscience.’ ” We could all learn rules like that, and be better for them. It was such a training as this, received from his rector and from his parents, that made George Washington the perfect gentleman he was.

Then, too, George Washington was kind and thoughtful of others, as a true gentleman always is. Some time ago I read a story about him which illustrates this point. One day, walking in the streets of Philadelphia with a friend, he met a Negro, who bore upon his shoulder a heavy burden. Washington stepped off the pavement into the muddy street until the Negro had gone by.

“Why did you allow that darkey to crowd you off the pavement?” said his friend.

“Crowd me off the pavement?” said Washington. “Look at his bent shoulders, look at the perspiration streaming down his brow, think of the hard lines of that man’s life! Ah, my friend, always respect the burdened.”

A gentleman always respects the burdened. He is thoughtful and kind to little children, to ladies, to old folk, and to all who are in need.

Last of all, Washington was a *Christian* gentleman; he trusted in God and made no secret of it. Not only did he attend church regularly, but many times during that winter when his army was at Valley Forge he would steal away alone into the woods, and he always came back with a cheerful countenance. His friends wondered at this. One day a Quaker whose name was Mr. Potts is said to have come upon him, accidentally, in the woods, kneeling and praying. God heard Washington’s prayers for his country, for his soldiers, and for himself, for he gave them strength to endure during the terrible winter at Valley Forge, and later brought victory to their army.

XLIII

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY)

YESTERDAY was Lincoln's Birthday, so this morning I want to talk to you about him.

There are two great things which Abraham Lincoln did that the world will never forget. Do any of you know what they are? Yes, he freed the slaves and he saved the Union. For this he will go down into history as a great man.

But Lincoln was a good man as well as great, and this is the reason we love and admire him so much. The more you read and study his life and his sayings, the more you will appreciate him. There are many traits in his character which made him what he was, but this morning I can speak only of two—his honesty and his kindness.

First, honesty. Do any of you boys and girls know what the people called Abraham Lincoln? Yes, that is right, "Honest Abe." Having discovered on one occasion that he had taken six cents too much from a customer, he walked three miles that evening, after his

store was closed, tired as he was, to return the money.

At another time Lincoln was postmaster in a very small office in Illinois. After a while the office was discontinued and there was owing to the government seventeen dollars and a few cents. Three or four years later, when Lincoln had become a lawyer at Springfield, an agent of the Post-office Department entered his office, and called on Lincoln for the money—apparently the government had forgotten all about it. In the meantime, Abraham Lincoln had been fighting bravely against poverty. His friends knew this, and one of them, who was present when the officer came, called Lincoln from the room and offered to lend him whatever money he needed. Lincoln smiled, but went to his room and pulled out a little old trunk which he opened. In this trunk was a little package of coins which had been paid by the people who had bought the stamps. When the agent left the room, Lincoln remarked quietly that he never used any man's money but his own. Yes, the people knew that Abraham Lincoln could be trusted, and even his political enemies never doubted his honesty.

Secondly, kindness of heart. Abraham Lincoln was kind to birds and animals, to

little children and old people, to widows and orphans, to soldiers, and even to his bitterest enemies. Many are the stories which can be told illustrating his kindness. I have selected one that is not quite as well known as the others.

One day, when Lincoln was a poor young lawyer in Springfield, he was going to his office, when he saw a little girl crying at the door of her home. He stopped to inquire what was the matter and the little girl sobbed out her story. She was going to visit a little friend in another town. She had planned for it and dreamed of it for weeks and the expressman had forgotten to come for her trunk. "Oh ho!" he cried, "wipe your eyes and come on quick!" and before the little girl knew what he was going to do, he had put the trunk on his shoulder and was off down the street. She trotted behind him, drying her tears as she went. They reached the station in time. Mr. Lincoln put the little girl on the train and told her to have a good time. "It was just like him," she said in later years, as she told the story. Yes, it was just like him, he was never too busy to be kind.

Once when a friend remonstrated with him for doing so much, he replied: "I want it to be said of me when I am gone, I always plucked

a thistle and planted a flower wherever a flower would grow." Let us take that for our motto. Perhaps we too will grow up to be like Abraham Lincoln.

XLIV

THE MEANING OF LENT

THIS is the first Sunday in Lent, and as you will be hearing so much about Lent, I thought you would like to know what it means.

The word "Lent" formerly had a different meaning from what it has now. It came from an old Saxon word "Lengten," meaning "spring." In those days they called spring "Lengten" because the days began to grow longer at that time. By degrees "Lengten" was shortened until it became "Lent."

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, as it is called, and lasts forty days, not counting Sundays. Years and years ago, very early in the history of the church, the Christians thought they would like to commemorate the forty days when Jesus fasted in the wilderness and was tempted by Satan, so they began to observe Lent for that purpose, and also as a preparation for Easter. So now, all over the world, Christians observe Lent.

First, Lent is supposed to be a time of self-denial and sacrifice. Jesus gave up all food for

forty days, so now a great many people give up meat, sweets, and certain pleasures during Lent in remembrance of Jesus' self-denial. I think that it is a good thing to deny ourselves, but the trouble with so many people is that they think that if they sacrifice during Lent, they can indulge themselves all the rest of the year.

What does sacrifice mean? It means giving up something you really like. One morning after church a man said to his wife, "The preacher said in his sermon that 'religion is worth just what it costs,' and I have determined to give up something for religion by denying myself."

"What will you give up?" she asked.

He said that he would give up coffee, as he was very fond of it. Then the wife said that she would give up something for Jesus too. She would give up her favorite cup of tea. Then the daughter said she would give up candy and some of her other pleasures. The father turned to his son Tom, who was busy eating all the time, and asked him, what he would give up? Tom said: "I'll give up fish. I never did like the stuff anyway."

But that was not sacrifice, was it? No, sacrifice is giving up something we really like. What will you give up for Jesus this Lent,

so that others may learn to love him as you love him?

Secondly, Lent is a special time for prayer. Jesus is about to begin his work of telling men and women and children about God and his love. Before he starts his ministry, he goes into the desert to be alone for forty days. What does he do there? Two things at least. He plans and he prays. He plans for his future work, how he will conduct it and what he will do, and then he prays God to help him carry out his plans. While the Bible does not tell us this, I am sure that Jesus spent most of his time in prayer. That was one of the reasons why, when the devil came to him at the end of the forty days and tempted him, he was able to say, "No."

So, boys and girls, I want you during Lent not only to sacrifice—to give up things for Jesus—but I also want you to do what he did in those forty days—I want you to pray. Pray not only for your father and mother and your dear ones, as I know you do, but pray also for your Sunday school, for your church, for your pastor, and for the missionaries in foreign lands. Pray that men and women, boys and girls, will give their hearts to Jesus and learn to love and serve him.

"But," you say, "What can the prayers of

a boy or girl do?" They can do much. Many years ago a famous preacher was accompanied by a little blind boy, his brother. Whenever this great preacher stood in the pulpit and people wept and trembled at his words, close by would be the little blind child with his sightless eyes turned upward as if watching his brother. One night the preacher saw a vision. He thought an angel touched him and pointed to his little brother. Then he saw a stream of light shining on the boy's sightless eyes, and he understood that it was not his eloquent words, but the prayers of his little blind brother which had wrought such wonderful results. If you pray as the little blind boy did, God will bless your prayers as he blessed his.

XLV

PALM SUNDAY

It was Palm Sunday. Jesus, riding upon a young colt, comes in triumph from the little town in Bethany across the Mount of Olives, down through the valley through which flowed the brook, Kedron, then up the steep road which leads to the Temple.

The people had gone forth to meet him and to bring him in like a king. They were so full of enthusiasm that they cut palm branches from the trees and waved them in the air. Some of the people spread the branches on the ground, and others, who had no branches, threw down their coats and cloaks for a carpet, so the king could ride over them. So, the people going before and others following after, accompanied Jesus right into the courtyard of the Temple and filled the air with their welcome. There, Matthew tells us, new voices come to the ear of Jesus. A company of children take up the refrain and shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David." How sweet was the sound of those voices to Jesus! For he loved children and the children loved him.

On the outskirts of the crowd there were bad men who hated Jesus. They scowled, they frowned at every word of praise, and in a few days they were shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" But I am so glad that there were no children among them. No boys and girls, so far as we know, cried, "Crucify him!" They would not treat a friend so ill, and Jesus was their friend. But the boys and girls were there right at his feet, on that Palm Sunday, crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and in every age and in every place where they have heard about him children have loved Jesus and sung his praises.

How many of you would have liked to have been in Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday long ago, and to have carried a palm, and to have shouted "Hosanna" with all the rest of the children? Hold up your hands. Yes, I know you all would have liked to have been there! But you can do now what is just as pleasing to Jesus as that was in those days.

First, if you really love Jesus, you must show it by being happy at home, at school, and at play, so that your friends will say with truth: "Jennie is a real Christian. She never whines nor sulks, but is just bubbling over with happiness. We love to have her with us." If your friends can say that of you, boys

and girls, then you are praising Jesus by your lives, just as those children praised him who carried a palm and shouted "Hosanna."

But I know of another way for you to carry a palm and shout "Hosanna." Scholars tell us that this triumphant procession of Jesus on Palm Sunday was a prophecy of what should be in the future. What do they mean by that? They mean that the day will come when men, women, and children everywhere will worship Jesus as King, and love and serve him. Therefore, if you can do anything to help other boys and girls to love Jesus and be his disciples (and one way of helping is by inviting them to come to church and Sunday school, where they will hear about him), if you can do anything to help missionaries tell about Jesus by giving of your money and praying for them, then, to that extent, you are like the children in the Temple courtyard at Jerusalem who carried palms and shouted "Hosanna."

XLVI

SPRINGTIME

(EASTER)

“FOR, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of the singing of birds is come.”

A poet wrote those words, one who loved the flowers, the trees, and the birds as I hope you all do. He was so happy because springtime had come again—and we feel happy too. You know, of all the seasons, I like the spring the best; don't you? It seems to me to be the fairest and sweetest of them all. Oh, yes, winter is all right with its sledding, its skating, snow-balling, and other winter sports, but there are many cold, dreary days.

I remember how happy we were as boys in England when the first snowdrop appeared. It seemed such a frail little thing coming up through the hard ground, sometimes when there was snow all around. The chilling north winds would blow upon it, the sleet would strike it, but it grew bravely on, bringing cheer to all who saw it. It brought good cheer not only because it was beautiful in its snowy

purity, but because it was one of the first heralds of spring—to tell us that winter was almost over and the spring was nigh. Then, very soon, we children would go out into the woods and search for primroses and bluebells. You know that is one of the privileges country children have—they can search for the trailing arbutus and the early blue violets, and they can watch for Jenny Wren, the little chippy, and the robin to come back. When they come we know that spring is really here.

Yes, we are happy, but I wonder if we are also thankful, or do we forget to say “Thank you” to God for making the world so beautiful. You know Jesus used to find lessons, or parables, all about him—in the flowers, in the farmer sowing the seed, in the setting sun, and in the birds flying overhead. Don’t you think we could find a parable in this joyous springtime?

First, the springtime should remind us of God our Father. Every flower that blooms has a message from him, especially in the spring when the flowers first appear. He seems to be saying to us what one of the sweetest flowers that bloom in the spring and early summer says, “Forget-me-not.” Yes, I can hear him saying: “I watched over the flowers during the long winter months when they

were asleep, and now I have brought them to life again. See how beautiful they are! Let them cheer you and make you hopeful and happy, for as I have taken care of them, so will I not forget to take care of you."

Then the second lesson of the springtime is an Easter lesson. Some one has said that "The spring is the Easter of the earth." During the winter the trees and flowers were all apparently dead. The trees looked just like dry sticks as they bent and crackled in the winter's wind, and the flowers were all buried under the cold ground. But now the trees are beginning to awaken—to send forth little green shoots and buds—and the flowers are breaking through the earth on every side. How beautiful are they in their many colors! Yes, it is a lesson of Easter time that spring brings, for just as the flowers have sprung up from their wintry graves, and just as Jesus rose from the grave on Easter Day, so, one day, we and all our dear ones shall rise again more beautiful than ever before.

XLVII

REMEMBER

(MEMORIAL DAY)

WE all know what this word means, for father and mother and teachers are constantly saying to us, "Now, remember!"

We do forget so soon—don't we?—not only our lessons, but the kind things our friends do for us. We are not alone in this, for men and women forget too. So the custom of having Memorial Day has sprung up in order that we may not forget.

In Washington, for example, the great Washington Monument helps us to remember our first President, who was called the "Father of his Country." In Boston, the fine Bunker Hill Monument was erected so that we might not forget the famous battle of Bunker Hill—the first battle in the War of the Revolution. On the banks of the Hudson is a beautiful tomb which you all must try to see, for it is a memorial to General Grant, the famous general of the Civil War, who led the armies of the North to victory. In Arlington Cemetery there is a great monument erected to

the "Unknown Dead," to show the world, that although the names of those heroes are unknown, their country does not forget them. But not only are there monuments and statues erected in memory of those who died in the Civil War, but out of that great conflict has come one of the most beautiful of all days, "Memorial Day."

Soon after the war ended, men and women began to decorate the graves of the soldiers with flowers. Of course it was in the spring when the blossoms were most plentiful. This suggested the idea of setting one day apart throughout the whole country for this purpose. General John A. Logan, Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued an order, naming May 30, 1868, "For the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country." Because of this practice of decorating the graves, the thirtieth of May has been called "Decoration Day," but I think that "Memorial Day" is a much finer name, don't you? It signifies to the whole world that it is our "National Day of Remembrance."

Very few of the Civil War veterans are now living, for it is a long time since the Civil War, but even when all the heroes are gone we will continue to observe Memorial Day to

show that we do not forget what those brave soldiers did for our country.

There is another reason now for observing Memorial Day. On this day we may also pay tribute to our soldier boys who died in the great World War. We have our Honor Rolls on which all their names are written, and our Service Flags—a star standing for each soldier or sailor. On many of the Service Flags there are gold stars, indicating that the men whom they represent did not come back, and never will come back, for they gave up their lives for their country.

On this Memorial Day let us remember them also and pray for the fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, wives and children who miss them. In addition to remembering them on Memorial Day we must show that we remember them by being true to our flag, the stars and stripes, and to the principles for which they fought and died.

“Whatever else the whole wide world may do
Be true, my heart, be true!”

XLVIII

AND THE CHILD GREW

(CHILDREN'S DAY)

"AND the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." These words, boys and girls, were spoken concerning the child, Jesus, as he lived with his parents in Nazareth until he was twelve years old, when he went up with them to Jerusalem.

After Jesus returned from Jerusalem he continued to live with Joseph and Mary until he became a man. During that time it was said of him, that "he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

Most people usually think of Jesus as a full-grown man. They think of him as a teacher and preacher; they think of him as the Great Physician, healing the sick, or as the Wonder-Worker performing many miracles. On this Children's Day I want you to think of him, not as a man, but as a boy like you boys.

First, Jesus grew physically just as you are growing. He was a real boy, and he joined with other boys in their sports and in their

games and in their pastimes as you do; and perhaps, as you have done many times, he stood against the door and measured his height to find out how much taller he was than at the last measurement.

Secondly, we are told that "Jesus waxed strong in spirit"; that is, he grew strong in will-power, in character, and he did it as you will do it by being obedient, and by learning to say "No" to all temptations.

I saw a beautiful little play this week entitled "A Little Pilgrim's Progress," in which the little pilgrim was on his way to the city of the King. At the wayside inn, kept by Dame Decision, he met other pilgrims between whom he was compelled to choose; he wanted Dame Decision to do it for him, but she said, "No, every pilgrim must choose for himself." So later, the little pilgrim chose, I am glad to say, the right companions, and by his choice strengthened his will and his character, and, like Jesus, he waxed strong in spirit.

Thirdly, Jesus "grew in wisdom." Because Jesus is the Son of God we think of him as knowing everything, and do not realize that as a little boy he studied his letters just as you did, that he went to school, and doubtless he had many hard lessons just as you have.

He did not give up, however; he persevered until he conquered them all. Among other things he committed to memory verses of Scripture, many of which he used later when he was tempted, just as I suggested that you do, when I spoke to you on the Japanese proverb "Hear no evil." So if you would grow in wisdom, as Jesus did, you must be faithful in your lessons, as he was, and always do your best.

Fourthly, Jesus "grew in favor with God and man." He grew in favor with God and man because of his unselfishness. Nobody likes a selfish, greedy person, but we love an unselfish person—one who is always thinking of how he can help others. Jesus was like that, and I am sure he began when he was a boy.

"What is a boy?" a visitor asked a class, and one bright little fellow answered, "A boy is the beginning of a man." In the same way, of course, a girl is the beginning of a woman. So if you boys and girls want to be like Jesus when you grow up, you must begin now while you are boys and girls.

Norman Duncan, in his story *Doctor Luke of the Labrador*, tells this little incident of Doctor Luke when he was a boy.

"She sat me in her lap," said the Doctor.

"Look into your mother's eyes, laddie," she said, "and say after me this." And then she said as I repeated after her, word by word, "My mother looked upon my heart and found it brave and sweet—willing for the day's work, and harboring no shameful thought." Again and again she had me say it until I knew every word by heart. "Ah," said she at last, "but you'll forget." "No, no!" I cried, "I'll not forget!"¹ And it was because he did not forget that he became the famous Doctor Luke of the Labrador, whom everybody loves, and who has done so much for the men, women, and children there.

If you keep your heart "brave and sweet and willing for the day's work, not harboring any shameful thought," you, too, will grow as Doctor Luke grew, as Jesus grew, in favor with God and man. So let us repeat those words together until we know them.

¹ Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers, New York and Chicago. Used by permission.

XLIX

HOW THANKSGIVING DAY BECAME A NATIONAL HOLIDAY

JUST three hundred years ago, in 1621, our first real American Thanksgiving Day was observed. Do you know the story of the first Thanksgiving Day?

Governor Bradford, the governor of Massachusetts, issued a proclamation, setting aside a certain day "For thanksgiving unto God for the plenteous harvest." So, after attending church and listening to a sermon—which, by the way, was much longer than sermons are to-day—the colonists and friendly Indians came together for the Thanksgiving dinner. It was such beautiful weather that the tables were set out of doors. What a wonderful time they had, with wild turkey, pumpkin pie, and other good things! For you know the first part of the year, before the harvest, they almost starved to death, so scarce had become their food! But with all their feastings and their merry-makings they did not forget to thank God for the abundant crops and for helping them out of their despair.

After this one day each year was set aside as Thanksgiving Day in New England, at which time the governor read a proclamation. There was always a church service and the various family reunions. President Washington in 1789 issued a proclamation setting aside Thanksgiving Day for the whole country in acknowledgment of God's many blessings and favors, and especially for helping them to establish a government of their own. Following Washington, several Presidents issued proclamations at different times, but there was no regular annual Thanksgiving Day.

One person, more than anyone else, was responsible for Thanksgiving Day becoming a national holiday. I wonder if you know her name, for it is so very rarely mentioned, that few people do know it. A lady, whose name was Mrs. Sarah Hale, came from Boston to Philadelphia, to edit a woman's magazine. She had always lived in New England and had observed Thanksgiving Day, and she did not want the custom to die out, so she sent letters to all the governors of the States and Territories, asking them to set apart the last Thursday in November for a national Thanksgiving Day. At first they did not pay any attention to her, but year after year she wrote, until finally a few responded to her request.

During the Civil War the custom lagged, but Mrs. Hale was persistent. She would not allow it to be forgotten, so she kept writing to the governors and others about it. After the battle of Gettysburg she wrote to President Lincoln and suggested that he appoint a national holiday of thanksgiving. This he did, and ever since then each President has set apart the last Thursday in November for national thanksgiving, and has written a proclamation in which he mentioned the things for which we are to be thankful. That is the story of how Thanksgiving Day became a national holiday for all.

Next Thursday will be our national Thanksgiving Day for this year. For what ought we to give thanks? There are so many things that I cannot mention them all, but this morning I want you to give thanks for the everyday blessings. Let us repeat together, "We thank God for our everyday blessings." Instead of forever complaining about the things you have not appreciate the things you do have.

One night a little girl was describing what each member of the family liked. The mother liked so and so, and the brother and elder sister, and finally it came to father's turn to be described, and he, laughingly asked, "And what do I like, Nancy?"

“Oh,” said the little girl, slowly—“well, daddy, you like most everything we haven’t got.”

I want you to appreciate the things that you do have. Your eyesight, for example; or did you ever think that you ought to be thankful for the pencils and pens with which you write, and for the paper on which you write? If you go back to the Pilgrims, or even to the time of the Revolutionary days, you will find that boys and girls did not have these conveniences. Henry Clay, the great orator, learned to write by filling a box with sand and tracing letters with a pointed stick, and Daniel Webster plucked his pen out of the wings of a pet goose and made ink out of the soot scraped from the fireplace. They never dreamed of fountain pens and pencils such as we have to-day. If you are in New York and have friends in Philadelphia, you can go to see them in just two hours. When Benjamin Franklin first took the coach from New York to Philadelphia he spent four days on the journey. Why, it took a whole week to go from New York to Boston. So you see we ought to be thankful for the street cars, and the railways, and the beautiful automobiles, which we have to-day; and yet, they are so common, we do not think about them at all.

So I want you boys and girls to thank God for your everyday blessings.

A boy was once bringing home a loaf of bread when a gentleman asked him, "What have you there?"

"A loaf of bread."

"Where did you get it?"

"From the baker."

"Where did he get it?"

"He made it."

"Of what did he make it?"

"Flour."

"Where did he get the flour?"

"From the miller."

"Where did the miller get it?"

"From the farmer."

"Where did the farmer get it?"

Then the truth suddenly dawned upon the boy's mind, and he said "From God."

And so, boys and girls, I want you to remember that all your blessings come from God, and do not forget to say "Thank you," not only on one day of the year—our national Thanksgiving Day—but on every day.

Do you know this story? God sent two little birds out of heaven, each with a basket in his bill. One was to get the prayers of the people who wanted something from God, the other little bird was to bring back the "Thank

you" prayers. In a few hours the first little bird came back so tired and his wings so drooping that he could hardly fly, his basket was so heavy, filled with prayers saying, "I want this, and I want that."

But where was the other little bird? God waited days and weeks, and finally the little bird came and there was just one tiny note of "Thank you" in the basket. Only one "Thank you" and so many "I want" prayers! Will you be a little bird who brings in a "Thank you" to God for every blessing?

L

ARMISTICE DAY

WHAT day do we observe this week? Yes, Armistice Day. On November the eleventh, 1918, at eleven o'clock in the morning, the Armistice was signed, indicating that the great World War was over. How happy we all were! Some of us went to New York, and we never saw such a celebration in all our lives. Bells were ringing! There were parades and bands. The streets were crowded with people singing and shouting, or crying and laughing, and confetti was flying in all directions.

Why was everyone so happy on Armistice Day? There were two reasons. First, we were happy because the armies of the Allies had won the victory—the Kaiser and his hosts were defeated, our country was safe. Our liberty, our democracy—yes, the democracy of the world—had been preserved. You will understand what this means as you grow older, but I am sure that you boys and girls were happy because the Germans were defeated.

The second reason why we were so happy was that soon, very soon, our soldier boys

would be coming home again. While we were very proud of them when they went away, we were very sorry, for we did not know that we should ever see them again. So on Armistice Day we were all very happy because we knew that many of them would come back home to us.

Now, you boys and girls will probably never go to war, for we pray that there will never be another war like this great World War. Yet you can all be good soldiers of Jesus Christ. That requires just the same qualities as those needed to be good soldiers of your country. Paul tells Timothy just what these qualities are.

First, Paul says, "To be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, you must endure hardness." We all know how our soldiers did that. A business man, serving in the Young Men's Christian Association in France, was amazed at the way the American soldiers endured hardness. These boys came from some of the finest homes of America, where they had every comfort and convenience, yet in France they lived in mud-huts in severest cold, wet, and mud, and they never uttered a word of complaint. He said he marveled at them constantly because they did not simply endure hardship—they laughed at it, they derided it, and made the best of it.

Doctor Conwell, of Philadelphia, writes that

he heard President Lincoln tell of a man who, in rail-splitting, always went for the heaviest end of the log. How they admired that man, and respected him! You know, boys and girls, most people do not do that; they would run for the light end of the log. That is, they would choose the easiest task and leave the hardest for some one else. But to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ we must endure hardness. We must be willing to take the heavy end of the log.

Not only must we endure hardness, but we must endure it cheerfully as our soldier boys did. How they laughed and sang and made sport amid all their hardships! One of their songs, you remember, was

“What’s the use of worrying?

It never was worth while,

So pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag

And smile, smile, smile!”

A doctor was examining the wounded men as they were brought into an emergency station near the battle line in France. When he came to one stretcher where the soldier was completely covered up he thought this soldier boy was unconscious, when suddenly the covering was snatched from his face by the soldier himself as he smiled up into the eyes of the

surgeon. Though severely wounded, he was having his little joke with the doctor. He endured hardship and suffering cheerfully. That is what Paul tells the young Christian to do, to "Rejoice in the Lord always"; and that is what we will do if we are good soldiers of Jesus.

The third thing that the soldier does is to learn obedience. In fact, that is one of the first lessons he learns. He must obey his superior officers, no matter what the commands are. It was very easy for the boys to obey when the word came to go to France, because they all wanted to go. But some of the soldiers were ordered to stay at home and do necessary work here, and it was very hard for them because their hearts were on the other side, but they obeyed, because every good soldier is obedient.

You boys and girls must learn to obey father and mother and teachers, and all who are in authority over you. This is true even in sports. I was reading the other day of a coach who was drilling a football team in one of our schools. One of the boys, one of the very best players, was not playing as he had been instructed, when the trainer said to him, "Why don't you fall on the ball, as you are told?"

"I don't feel like it," he said.

"Then put on your sweater and leave the field," was the order; and he did not allow him to come back that season, though they needed him very badly. The player himself and the rest of the school did not think that the coach would send him off because the player was so badly needed. But the coach believed that to play good football they must learn to obey, whether they felt like it or not. They never disobeyed him again.

Last of all, to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ we must be unselfish and willing to sacrifice. How unselfish were our soldier boys, how willingly they gave themselves for each other and their country! A Young Men's Christian Association secretary, writing from France, tells how he saw a British colonel sitting outside a dressing station and asked him why he did not go in and have his wounds attended to. He replied, "It isn't my turn yet." Some time later the secretary came along again and spoke to the colonel, who was still sitting outside. He saw that all of the men who had been wounded had received attention, and that others had arrived and had also been treated. So he asked the colonel the same question again and received the same reply, "It is not my turn yet." You see, he

had given up his turn to the soldier boys, and that was doing what all our boys were constantly doing—sacrificing for others; yes, and many of them gave up their lives. So, on Armistice Day, as you rejoice because so many of our boys are safe at home again, I want you to remember the boys who will never come back because they gave up their lives in battle. They died for us. Let us try to be worthy of them. Now let us stand, with heads bowed, in perfect silence, as a tribute to their memory.

LI

THE STORY OF THE WISE MEN

(CHRISTMAS)

IN the days of long ago, in the Far East beyond the seas, there lived men who studied the stars. They were called "Magi," or "Wise Men." They studied the stars because they thought that in them they could foretell the future. They built their watchtowers along the Tigris and other Eastern rivers, so they could more readily observe the stars.

One night, as they watched the heavens, they saw a new star which they had never seen before. It was thought in those days that when a new star appeared some great king was to be born, and, as they were all then expecting a great king to rule over the world, the Wise Men at once concluded that the star heralded his birth. So they dressed in their finest robes, ordered the servants to get the camels ready with the necessary food and water, prepared their presents, and off they started.

Have you ever seen a picture of them—the Wise Men going in front, their camels gayly

decked with bright trappings and embroideries, and their servants following, leading the camels with their baggage? Some of the servants were armed with spears and swords to protect themselves against robbers.

So the Wise Men started on their long journey through the desert, over the hot yellow sands to the "Jesus' land," for "Jesus" was the name of the new King. The bright star which they had seen led the way, being to them what a lighthouse is to the sailor on a dark night—their guide. At last they arrived at Jerusalem, and we can imagine what a stir they would cause, as they asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him?" Suppose a few strangers, dressed in long, flowing robes, should walk up and down our city streets!

At last King Herod heard of them. Now, he was a wicked king who thought his enemies were plotting to have a new king. So, he sent for these Wise Men and examined them carefully, asking them when they first saw the star and all about it. Then he sent for the learned men of the Jews to see if they knew where this new King was to be born. They told him "In Bethlehem of Judæa" and they unrolled their scroll and read this prophecy:

“And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.”

So the king sent the Wise Men to Bethlehem, telling them to find the young child and bring him word again. Why? He said he wanted to worship, but do you think he did? No, he wanted to kill Jesus.

The Wise Men mounted their camels, and off they started again in the quiet of the evening, and there before them again shone the bright star, for it had disappeared when they entered Jerusalem. Over the hills and down through the valleys, they followed the star in the moonlight, until they came to Bethlehem, over which the star seemed to hover. There they camped all night, and when the gates of the city were opened in the morning, they went in and found the house over which the star stood, and their journey was ended. Ordering the servants to unpack their gifts they entered the house and there were Joseph and Mary and the young child Jesus whom they had come so far to find. How happy they were to have found him! They presented their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh—the most precious things they had—and bowed down before him.

LII

BLOTS

OLD AND NEW YEAR

(OBJECTS: SHEET OF WHITE PAPER, PEN,
ERASER, KNIFE)

SEE this beautiful piece of white paper—not a speck upon it anywhere. I take my pen to write a message upon it for you. There! what have I done? I have made a big blot right in the center of the page. Yes, and I am afraid that sometimes we see blots just like that on the children's copybooks, spoiling otherwise perfect pages.

So, boys and girls, there are blots of sin and selfishness that mar your lives. If during the past year you said a mean thing or told a wrong story, or disobeyed, then you made a blot on your life, just like this ink blot on the paper. How shall we erase these blots?

First, let us write over them and see if we can hide them in that way. That is what the rich man does who gets his money dishonestly and then gives to charity, hoping to square his dishonest acts. But, you see, the blot still

shows through the writing. We cannot wipe out the blots on our lives in this way.

If we cannot write over them, let us try to erase them. (Use an ink eraser and a knife.) Yes, we have erased the blot; but, see, boys and girls, I have left a hole in the paper. So every sin, even though it be no more than a cross word or a bad word, leaves its mark on our lives.

What, then, shall we do with our blots? There is only one thing to do and that is to tell God about them. Never try to hide your mistakes and sins from God any more than you would from your father or mother.

A friend once showed Mr. Ruskin a beautiful handkerchief that had been ruined by ink, saying that he was so sorry about it. Mr. Ruskin took the handkerchief and after awhile sent it back to his friend. His friend did not recognize it, for the artist had taken that ugly blot and drawing other lines all around it had worked out a design and made a beautiful figure. So, boys and girls, if you confess your mistakes to God, he will not only forgive you but he will take your lives and make them beautiful in spite of the blots.

God will also give you another clean white page at the close of this old year and at the beginning of the new so that you may do

better in the future. Listen to this little poem by C. R. Shaw, which gives us the picture of a school and a little boy. The teacher is speaking:

“He came to my desk with a quivering lip—
 The lesson was done.
 ‘Dear teacher, I want a new leaf,’ he said,
 ‘I have spoiled this one.’
 I took the old leaf so stained and blotted,
 And gave him a new one, all unspotted,
 And into his sad eyes smiled.
 ‘Do better now, my child.’

“I came to the Throne with a quivering soul—
 The hard day was done.
 ‘Dear Father, hast thou a new leaf for me?
 I have spoiled this one.’
 In place of the leaf, so stained and blotted,
 He gave me a new one, all unspotted,
 And into my sad heart smiled,
 ‘Do better now, my child.’ ”¹

See to it, boys and girls, that there are no blots on the clean white page during this beautiful new year. Try to keep it unspotted!

¹ *Poetry and Morals*, by Louis Albert Banks. Funk & Wagnalls Co., publishers, New York. Used by permission.

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